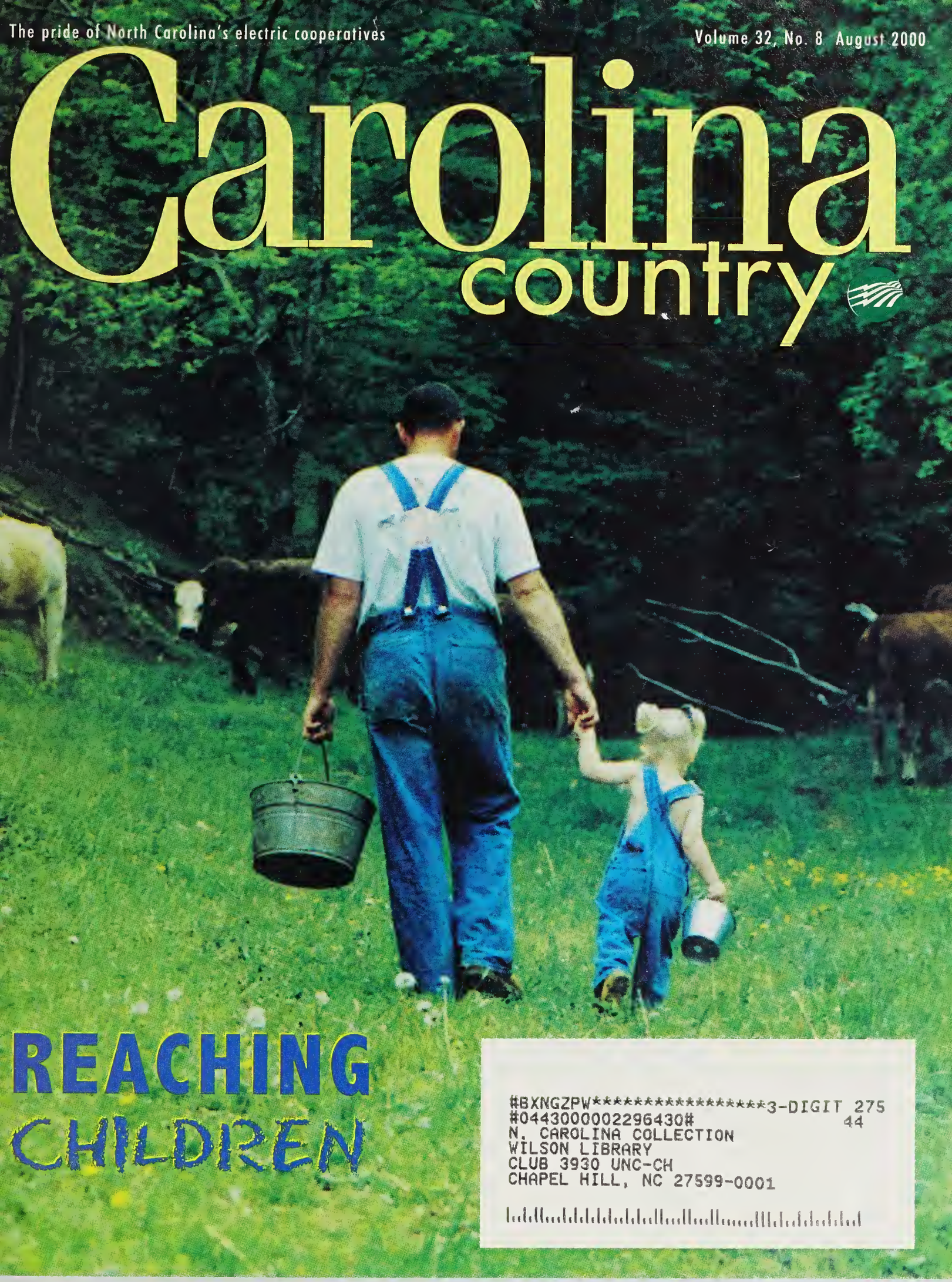
The pride of North Carolina's electric cooperatives

Volume 32, No. 8 August 2000

Carolina country



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Electric co-ops are looking for Bright Ideas grant applications — page 13

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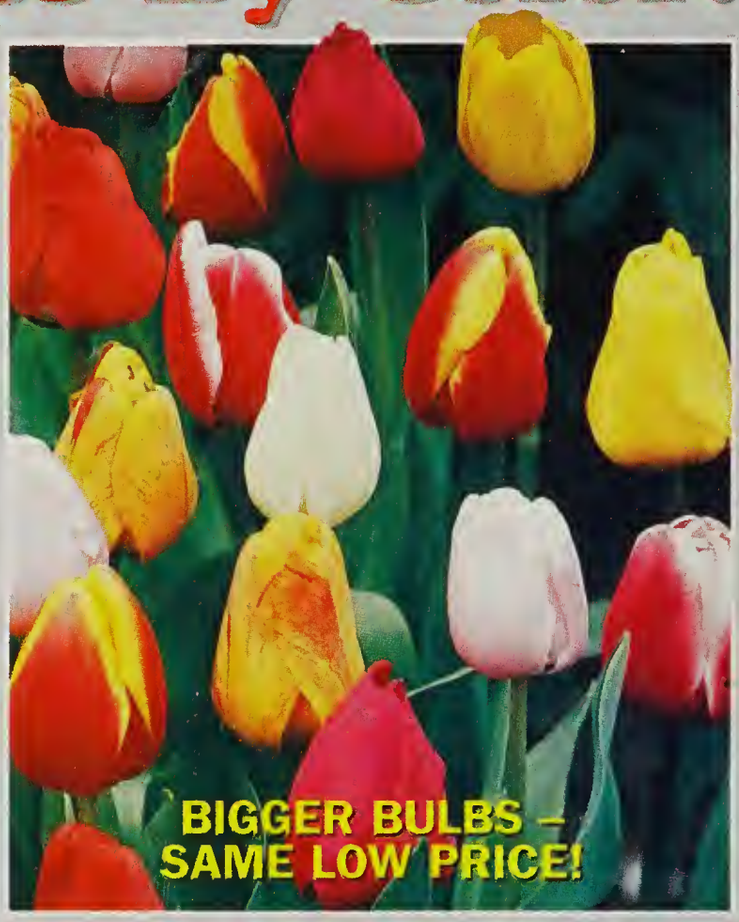

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On the Cover

Two-year-old Molly and her daddy "go feedin'" on their farm in Canton, Haywood County. "Our family farm is pretty laid back," says Molly's mother, Jill Mann, who made this photograph. "This moment of peace and simplicity is what life should be all about. Sometimes we take for granted how wonderful it is to have grown up and live in the mountains of North Carolina."

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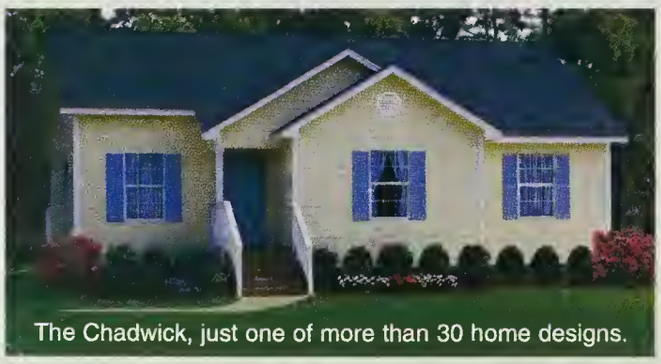

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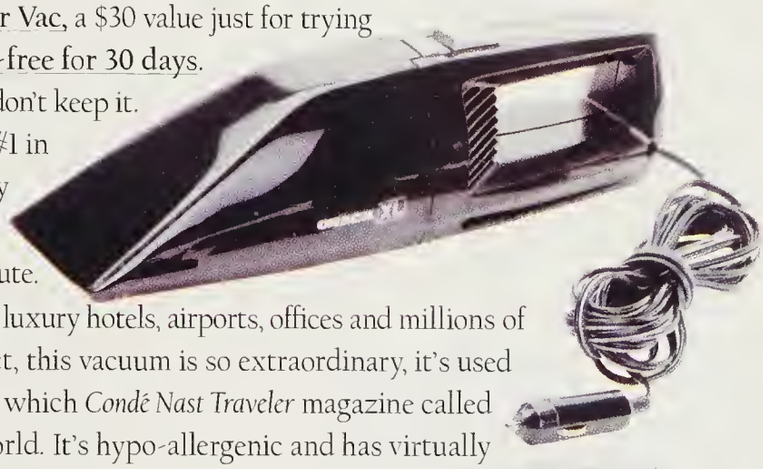

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first person

From our readers

Southern manners: Stopping for a funeral procession

In "Advice for Newcomers to NC" [March 2000], Martha Harper of Zebulon wrote that "in the country, people wave to everyone – whether they know you or not." I'm sure she meant while driving, like I've always seen my dad and grandfather do. But that made me think of something else.

I'm very proud of the fact that people driving in the opposite direction of a funeral procession stop, either in their lane or partially pulled off on the side of the road. I work at night with 230 other employees, so I've had the chance over the years to go to too many funerals during the day. I know from riding with several "imports" that this tradition of respect is not observed in other places. It's not uncommon in many other places for traffic on a four-lane road to zoom past a slower moving funeral procession going in the same direction. Stopping for the procession means so much to the families. I would like to see this kind of tradition passed on to our children.

Mark Hamilton
Stokesdale
EnergyUnited member

Last of Its Kind

I took a shot of the full moon one evening and double-exposed it onto a pre-dawn shot of the last standing Shell filling station that was actually shaped like a scallop shell. There were only eight of these buildings constructed in the 1930s by Quality Oil Company, all of them in Forsyth County, N.C. I call it "Last of Its Kind." It's a great landmark, and just to look at it brings to mind a wonderful time in the history of our state.

James Hart Isley
329 Lake Point Lane
Belews Creek, NC 27009

From the relatives of the Harper-Southerland Memorial lightning strike

As I read "Lightning in the Church" submitted by Grace Deaver of Seven Springs for the "Storm Stories" in your July issue, I realized that she was writing about Harper-Southerland Church at Albertson. My mother, who was 13 at the time, was one of the victims the day the lightning struck there. Having heard her and others retell the story through the years, I can almost envision the experience as if I had been there. Thus, I feel it is necessary to clarify some of the facts that were presented by Ms. Deaver.

The day the lightning struck was July 10, 1938. It was when our church was first being organized. Sunday School was held on Sunday afternoon in a small dwelling-house down the road from where our church was finally built. It was about 3 p.m., and the sky had been basically clear. My mother's class was being held outside. She was struck and fell unconscious on the ground. She had red streaks on both sides of her neck and two toes on her left foot were black. Apparently the lightning had traveled down her left side. The boy sitting on the bench beside her (whose last name was "Southerland") was killed instantly. Lightning traveled through the house, killing two Harper brothers inside the house, and their sister who happened to be standing on the back porch. The lightning finally grounded in a hog pen out behind the house.

We still have the news clippings from 1938 which report that approximately 3,000 people attended the funeral for these four people who were killed. The church building as we know it today was constructed in 1939. Chartered in 1945, it was named Harper-Southerland Memorial Presbyterian Church in memory of those who lost their lives.

Judith O. Taylor
Daughter of Olive C. Taylor
Deep Run
Tri-County EMC member

Publishing stories that readers tell was a very smart move. It makes the magazine more personal.

About the story "Lightning in the Church," the three Harpers that were killed were my uncles and aunt, Woodrow, Asa and Ada Harper. The church group was meeting at Willie and Sallie Harper's home. Willie was brother to the ones killed. My daddy, Johnnie Harper, another Harper brother, was there that day, too.

The old house where this happened still stands on Bill Sutton Road in Albertson, N.C. Harper-Southerland Church is just up the road from where I live on the old Harper farm, a dear place to me. These loved ones were gone a long time before I was born. I, too, hold a place in my heart for them.

Lualice H. McArthur
Albertson

Some winners of the safety drawing contest sponsored last spring by Piedmont EMC

By Matthew McPeek
Grade 5
Leasburg

By Ananta S. Bangdiwala
Grade 6
Chapel Hill

By Thomas Scott
Grade 4
Mebane

Cat lovers with a sense of humor

In July's "First Person," we ran some comments from readers who objected to a tongue-in-cheek lesson we published in April on "How to Bathe a Cat," submitted on behalf of "the Dog." Since then we have received maybe four times more letters and calls expressing another point of view. Here is a sampling:

I am an animal lover, but I thought the "How to Bathe a Cat" was very funny. I think people with no sense of humor should not read jokes.

James and Tammy Redmond
Statesville

It seems there is a group of people who look for ways to be offended, even to say that we should protect rats. My family and I knew it was a joke from the beginning. We want you to know that we were not offended.

Mrs. Grady Roberson
Candler

I own a cat and still found the article very funny. Some folks just take things too seriously anymore. Sorry you got your toes stepped on for publishing the story. If that's the worst thing you ever do, well ...

Kathy (by e-mail)
Canton

As a life-long cat hater, I appreciate your suggestion about cleaning cats. I will try it out on the first neighborhood cat that comes through my yard. (I would never do this, but I will have a good time showing the article to all my cat-lover friends.)

Mike Caskey
Weddington
Union Power Cooperative

A person who abuses animals is going to do it because of their lack of scruples, not because they read a joke in Carolina Country. I am an animal lover. However, I am distressed at the extreme use of political correctness that is making everyday life impossible. There is enough stress in America today.

Valerie Russell
Cape Carteret

Co-op linemen do whatever it takes

Everyone hates when their current goes out, including me. We seem to think that the crews cannot get the current on fast enough.

Well, the cover photo of your July "Storm Stories" issue reminded me of what I saw during Hurricane Floyd last year. I was helping the Walstonburg Volunteer Fire Department on their search-and-rescue boat moving out the last of the residents from their flooded homes. We saw a Pitt & Greene EMC truck come over. They told us they needed to get to a pole that fed current to the flooded area. Well, the problem was the pole was surrounded by approximately 4 or 5 feet of water.

You guessed it, these guys went out on the search boat to the pole and cut the power to the flooded and abandoned area so that other residents would not lose power because of a short. These guys were from a Kentucky co-op and were working with J.D. Baker of Pitt & Greene EMC.

How many people would know how to take a boat out to work safely with electricity?

So next time the current goes out, be patient. The line crews are only human, and they do all they can, as carefully as they can. When you see them out working wave to them. Do not cuss them, because if it were not for them we would not have current to our homes at all. To all EMC workers, I say, "keep up the good work."

Douglas Stocks
Walstonburg

What to do about deer and rabbits

Sara Smith of Troy called to ask if anyone has good advice on how to keep deer and rabbits away from her gardens and ornamentals. If you have good advice, send it to us and we'll publish it.

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More weather predictions

"With the wind before the rain, your topsails you can hoist again. With the rain before the wind, your topsails you must mind."

Dillon Smith
Balsam Grove
Haywood EMC member

Hoping to fit into North Carolina

Your magazine is most heart-warming with editorials and articles about the folks who have lived in North Carolina most of their lives. We look forward to receiving it and never throw out an issue.

Each time we read an article similar to the stories published in June ["The Kindest Thing Anyone Ever Did"], it reminds us of the many kindnesses that have been shown to us by the people in western North Carolina.

The articles written by the natives of North Carolina telling other folks how to "fit in," how to talk, how to act, how to drive, and how to just be a friend, have inspired us.

My husband and I bought a little cabin on beautiful rushing creeks in Hayesville (Clay County) over seven years ago and look forward to the time we are able to spend there. We intend to spend a lot more time there in just a couple of years. And it is our prayer and our hope that we will "fit in" and learn how to be a friend with the great people of North Carolina.

Margaret Howard
Vero Beach, Fla.

Jim Graham is one of a kind

Enjoyed the excellent feature on Jim Graham written by Bob Etheridge ["First Person," June 2000]. I'm glad Bob is in Congress or I'd feel my job in jeopardy even more than it is. He is a damn good writer! Enjoy your publication. and have enjoyed Jim for decades. We don't have many "one-of-a-kinds" left, do we?

A.C. Snow
The News & Observer
Raleigh

Looking for meat grinder parts

I am serviced by Halifax electric co-op, and they do a fine job in my area on Kerr Lake in Warren County.

I am in need of parts for an old meat grinder. The grinder is electric. It uses a #10 plate and knife. This grinder is about 50 years old. The manufacturer is Sanitary. I need the worm gear for this unit. If a reader has any knowledge about parts for this machine or has plates, knives or worm gears, please contact me. The knife has a 7/16-inch square hole in it, and the shaft size of the worm gear is 3/8 inch.

I can be reached by phone at 804-271-0450.

Frank Alexy
2924 Woodworth Rd.
Richmond,Va. 23237
E-mail: frankalexy@cavtel.net.

I stopped that divorce

Me and my husband had been married 14 months. He served 14 months after that and come home. We got a house and moved in.

One time he knew I was happy, so he come in when I was fixin dinner. He set down, and I knew some was on his mind.

I said, "Come an less eat." I guess he thought I would go screamin and crying.

He said, "I have been thankin of going to town and put in for a divorce."

I said, "Well, I have been thankin of that, too, but since you mention it, you go ahead and I will sign it any time and go back to my job, because I know two more that will be glad to hear *that*."

And I never heard him say "divorce" any more. But he did become jealous and would watch me when we were out together.

We lived together 48 years. He passed away seven years ago, and I am still a widow and miss him. He was a good man. The only man in my life.

Sarah M. Aldridge
Marshville
Union Power Cooperative

Recipe for boiled dumplings or saunker pie

Not all our readers saw Evelyn Whisnant's saunker pie recipe we published in May. Here it is again for everyone.

My mom used potatoes (sweet or Irish), sauerkraut, tomatoes, apples, peaches (or any other fruit). For vegetables, she peeled, sliced thin, and cooked with seasoning, leaving plenty of liquid until the dough is done. For fruit, she sliced it real thin (I chop with a food processor).

Needed:
- 1 stick margarine
- ¼ - 1 cup sugar (or sweetener)
- 2 to 3 cups fruit
- Dough (mix flour, shortening, and milk; roll out like for pie crust and slice into strips.
- 4-quart or larger pot

Instructions: Cut margarine into thin slices; put into bottom of pot. Add a layer of fruit, leaving a hole in middle, add more sugar if sour (I make fruit white), add a layer of dough, leaving hole in middle, repeat layers of fruit, sugar, and dough until pot is almost full.

Pour water into center hole until contents are covered. Add lid to pot; boil medium-high until dough is done (check with fork). If you wish, you can turn your oven to "broil" and brown the top of the dumplings. Mama did this if time pemitted, and always for company.

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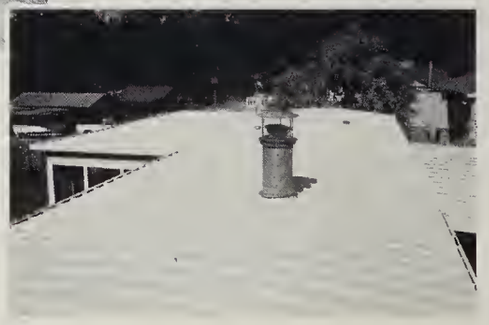

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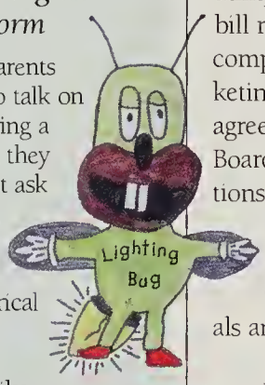
2MCCP08

The Lightning Bug says:

Hang up during an electrical storm



If your parents told you not to talk on the phone during a thunderstorm, they were right. Just ask Claire Simons, an employee of the National Electrical Safety Foundation. A lightning strike "came down the tree and through a copper wire into the house. The telephone was blown to smith-ereens," she says. "We were lucky nothing caught fire. And we now stay off the phone during an electrical storm."

It also pays to turn off appliances and even unplug them during a serious electrical storm to prevent damage to the circuits. *(Source: National Safety Council (www.nsc.org)*

Door-to-door energy supplier draws complaints in several states

The Georgia Public Service Commission this summer investigated complaints that retail supplier Energy America is "slamming" customers by switching them to accept its own energy supply without first gaining their permission.

Energy America is owned by California utility company Sempra and Canada's largest gas marketer, Direct Energy. The company conducts door-to-door sales. It is also being watched in other states:

- New Jersey consumers complain that Energy America misrepresents its agents as affiliated with a utility, takes advantage of non-English speakers, and fails to disclose that its offer of a 5 percent energy-bill rebate is contingent on a customer's remaining with the company for a full year. To resolve the complaints registered against it, the company suspended sales in December and January, revised its marketing materials, sent special notices to customers, instituted third-party verification for all contracts, and agreed to precautions when dealing with non-English speakers. It also paid $140,000 each to the state Board of Public Utilities (BPU) and the Division of Consumer Affairs for consumer education, investigations, and enforcement activities.
- In Michigan, about 1,000 customers registered complaints with regulators about Energy America's high-pressure tactics.
- Ohio, responding to more than 450 complaints, required Energy America to revise sales materials and scripts.
- In Maryland, the Public Service Commission reports it is watching the company, though the number of complaints received has been small.

Energy America has tried to settle its 700 Georgia complaints by offering $100,000 to help pay gas bills for senior citizens and low-income households. Thus far, however, the PSC isn't signing on.

Energy America's is not the only retailer accused of slamming. Two Georgia and two Pennsylvania suppliers have previously paid fines to settle similar charges.

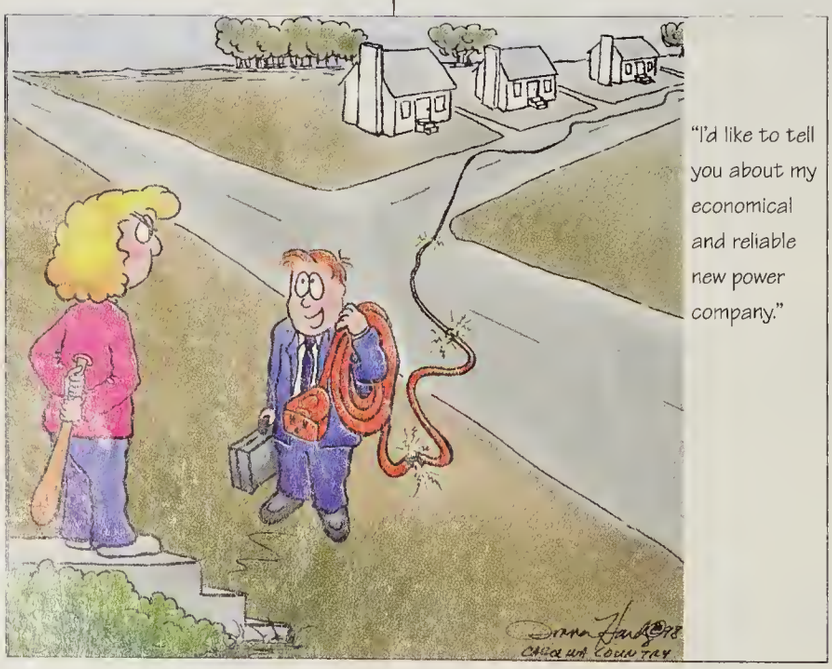
Some complaints about the Energy America might also arise from general frustrations about deregulation. In April, Xenergy released a survey that found that 46 percent of Georgia gas consumers "wish that natural gas deregulation had never occurred."

Additionally, some charges against the company seem overblown. The Newark Star-Ledger reported on a 92-year-old widower who signed up with Energy America, then cancelled. Two weeks later, his utility switched him. While New Jersey Citizen Action called that "slamming," it might have been just slow procedures and bad timing.

Many customers may be satisfied with Energy America. The company says it retained 46,000 of its 49,000 New Jersey sign-ups despite its regulatory troubles. It has 60,000 in Georgia, and 420,000 nationwide.

Why so many complaints?

One problem might be that Energy America outsources its sales force, giving it less control over the people who are getting it into trouble. Another could be decreasing familiarity with door-to-door sales; the Fuller Brush Man has long since morphed into a catalog, and Avon calls on fewer and fewer housewives.



Energy America is still in business. Regulators are giving the company time to resolve its problems.

Until problems like these are resolved, however, customers need to remain on the alert. Energy America has announced plans to expand its residential base to one million by the end of 2000, and two million by the end of 2001.

Last February's Electric Light & Power publication enumerated possible regulatory responses to slamming: "New York threatens a $100,000 maximum fine (after warning); Oregon has a maximum penalty of $25,000 per violation, per day; California has a $20,000 per-violation, per-day fine (and potential jail time); and Georgia imposes a $10,000 per-violation, per-day penalty. Most of the states also threaten de-certification, or the loss of authority to market within the state, along with hefty fiscal fines and possible jail time."

-- Charlotte Legates, Energy.com

A new "overlay" code 980 is coming to the 704 area code

10-digit dialing becomes mandatory Jan. 10, 2001

After January 10, 2001, all new telephone lines needed in the 704 area code will get a new area code: 980.

The new 980 area code is called an "overlay" because it will work within the existing geographic area served by 704.

All existing telephone numbers will continue to have the 704 area code, but new requests for telephone numbers will be assigned the new area code. The Federal Communications Commission requires that, in areas with two area codes, all local calls be dialed with 10 digits. So all phone line users within today's 704 area code will have to dial the 3-digit area code and 7-digit number for every call they make, even if calling next door or calling another 704 or 980 number.

If you make a local call, or "extended" local call, you will not have to dial a "1" first, but you will still have to dial the 704 or 980 area code.

Phone line users may begin using the new dialing system now. In fact, the state Utilities Commission urges people within the 704 area code to get into the habit of dialing the 10-digits, because as of January 10, 2001, it will be mandatory.

People and businesses who use automatic dialing systems, "private branch exchange" (PBX) systems, modems, fax machines and the like should begin reprogramming as soon as possible.

The geographic area affects all or some of the following counties: Iredell, Rowan, Cabarrus, Stanly, Anson, Union, Mecklenburg, Lincoln, Gaston, Cleveland, Alexander and Catawba. Lines currently in use in this 704 area will not change numbers or area codes. Only newly installed lines will gain the new 980 area code.

Providing an additional area code for the 704 area is necessary because new services and technologies, such as cellular phones, pagers and computer lines, are quickly exhausting all the numbers available. Also, the introduction of competition into the local telecommunications market has also greatly increased the demand for numbers, because when new telephone companies enter the market they need numbers to provide service to customers.

Establishing the new overlay code will not affect the cost of calls. Calls that are local calls now will remain local calls regardless of the area code. The area code that is dialed does not determine the cost of a call. Rather, the place of origin and place of termination of the call determine the cost.

For more information, watch the inserts in your telephone bill and see the "Consumer Information" portion of the N.C. Utilities Commission Web site at http://www.ncuc.commerce.state.nc.us/

Residential consumers are reluctant to switch suppliers so far

A study of residential customer activity in five states that have allowed consumers to choose among power suppliers indicates a hesitancy to switch.

Published in late April, the study examined reports issued by state government agencies responsible for monitoring the utility industry. It included reports from Maine, which permitted choice of suppliers beginning March 1, but no switching information was available.

Residential Customers Who Have Switched

State	Date market opened	How many had switched	How many are eligible	% who had switched
Massachusetts	March 1, 1998	360	2,054,326	0.017
California	March 31, 1998	162,996	8,849,199	1.9
Rhode Island	July 1, 1998	154	412,864	0.04
Pennsylvania	Jan. 1, 1999	429,670	4,643,969	9.25
New Jersey	Nov. 14, 1999	3910	3,075,812	0.13

Seen this lately?

It may not look pretty, but it keeps the lights on. Trees near power lines are one of the main causes of outages, especially after high windstorms, hurricanes, tornadoes and heavy snow or ice storms. Electric utilities try to minimize those outages by trimming trees within the powerline rights-of-way. If you see trees or limbs that are too close to lines and poles, notify your electric cooperative.

How to reach second graders

Why the Teacher of the Year earned Bright Ideas grants

BRIGHT IDEAS

By Rick Martinez

Laura Bilbro-Berry's DNA probably has T-E-A-C-H-E-R in her genetic code.

Her parents are teachers. Her husband, who started his career as a teacher, is an associate dean at East Carolina University, and his mother is a teacher's aide. Her high school biology teacher is among the most inspirational people in her life. Laura herself never had a chance. She was destined to be a teacher.

However, genetics isn't why Laura Bilbro-Berry is North Carolina's 2000 Teacher of the Year. Chalk that up to passion and creativity.

Those traits were put to good use in 1995 when she and three other teachers at John C. Tayloe Elementary in Washington convinced principal Robert G. Belcher to establish a program for students who entered the second grade academically behind.

"They had seen a similar program at another school and convinced me this was a better approach than retaining the students in the first grade," Belcher recalled.

The enormity of Bilbro-Berry's new assignment hit home on her first day with these academically at-risk second-grade students. "I asked my students to write a sentence about what they had done that day," she said. "They didn't know what a sentence was."

Bilbro-Berry and her team realized conventional teaching methods weren't going to work. If they were going to reach these students, they would have to come up with innovative teaching methods. Creating these new methods was only half the challenge. Funding them was the hard part.

Bilbro-Berry turned to the Bright Ideas Education Grant program at Tideland Electric Membership Corporation (EMC), Pantego, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative. The Bright Ideas program is sponsored by North Carolina's 27 electric cooperatives. Since it's inception in 1994, North Carolina's electric cooperatives have awarded more than $1.7 million to the state's teachers for innovative classroom projects.

Cooking With Math

In 1995, Bilbro-Berry received a Bright Ideas grant for her for project "Cooking With Math." The project's goal was to relate mathematics to the everyday world of her students. After thoughtful analysis, she concluded: "Hey, my kids like to eat. I like to eat. Let's do cooking." The Bright Ideas grant provided cooking equipment and supplies.

Her plan was simple: teach a math concept and then apply it by cooking up a dish. Eat the results. But the teaching didn't stop there. Her students also had to write about the experience and catalog recipes.

"Cooking With Math was more than

math," she said. "It also provided a way to integrate observation and language skills just like we do in the real world."

"Cooking With Math" benefited more than her students. It also buoyed Tayloe's program for at-risk second grade students, which had drawn a fair amount of skepticism.

One day, when her students were applying math theorems to spaghetti, a contingent of high-level administrators from the Beaufort County school system visited Tayloe school. They were attracted by the aroma from this one classroom, visited it, and sampled math skills as applied to spaghetti sauce.

"Our program gained a lot of credibility with the central office after that visit," Bilbro-Berry said. "They were able to see what we were trying accomplish and that it was working."

Boom Boxes and Creepy Crawlers

Bilbro-Berry turned to Tideland EMC and Bright Ideas again in 1997. She had observed that most of her students were not read to at home because their parents were employed in shift work or didn't have confidence in their own reading skills.

Armed once again with a Bright Ideas grant, Bilbro-Berry negotiated a deal with a local appliance dealer for boom boxes and bought audio books. As with her "Cooking with Math" project, she taught more than one discipline. This time she taught personal responsibility.

With the sternness of a police chief, she made her students earn a license before they were able to take the boom boxes home. If the students didn't treat the equipment or audio books with the proper care, they would get points on their record and be put on probation.

"After a while, being able to carry that boom box home was a point of pride for the students," she said.

In 1999 she used her third Bright Ideas grant to create "Creepy Crawler Critter Connections," an aquarium-based ecosphere that included crabs, newts, butterflies, insects and fish. The project became so popular that students from outside her class came by to monitor the progress of various critters. This time the added lessons included discussions about death and dying.

Laura Bilbro-Berry estimates she has raised approximately $10,000 through various grants for her at-risk students, but she says Bright Ideas is special because it's aimed at teachers, not just programs.

"Bright Ideas is about innovation, not philanthropy," she said. "They want people to enjoy teaching."

"It's great for the classroom," said principal Robert Belcher. "Teachers constantly have ideas for their students, but don't have the money to achieve them. Bright Ideas lets the teacher accomplish these goals for their students."

"Don't think for a minute we don't appreciate the recognition Bright Ideas gives to us." Bilbro-Berry said. "We're teachers. We'll take any recognition we can get."

Rick Martinez is manager of community and public affairs with the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives.

An ambassador for the teaching profession

As North Carolina's Teacher of the Year, Laura Bilbro-Berry will tour the state for a year as an ambassador for the teaching profession. The program, administered by the state Department of Public Instruction, also awards her a $7,500 stipend, a laptop computer and a trip to a national conference where she will represent the state in the National Teacher of the Year Competition. She also will serve a two-year term on the State Board of Education.

This year the N.C. Automobile Dealers Association gave the Teacher of the Year a car and also sponsored the state awards luncheon and six regional symposiums led by the state's regional Teachers of the Year.

The N.C. Center for International Understanding gives the honoree a Carolyn Hunt Scholarship for a trip abroad.

"Teachers are the driving force behind North Carolina's significant academic improvement," said State Superintendent Mike Ward.

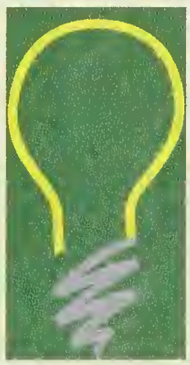
Last year's Teacher of the Year was Kim Hughes of Fox Road Elementary School in Wake County.

"Bright Ideas is about innovation, not philanthropy. They want people to enjoy teaching."

For a teacher's Bright Idea

What's it take for a teacher to win a Bright Ideas education grant from North Carolina's electric cooperatives ?

A good imagination helps.



Last year's winners included projects in phonics, earth science, technology, music, language arts, career education, mathematics, astronomy, even an "Adopt a Grandparent" program.

Each application will be submitted to a local electric cooperative for judging. Application deadline for most electric cooperatives is October 6, 2000. Funds will be distributed before the end of the calendar year. The projects should directly involve students, achieve clearly defined goals and learning objectives, use innovative and creative teaching methods, feature measurable results that can be evaluated upon completion, provide instructional experiences not otherwise available and reflect the school's overall objectives.

To learn more about North Carolina's electric cooperative Bright Ideas program or to apply for a grant, contact your local electric cooperative or to the Bright Ideas website at <http://www.ncbrightideas.com>.

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Why I Like My School

Confessions of North Carolina schoolchildren

Some students don't appreciate their school until they've left it. And the longer ago it was, the better the schooling was. They learned their lessons in small country schools where they stoked the woodstoves themselves, where stern teachers made them clap erasers outdoors and wash the blackboards indoors after they recited Latin and solved endlessly long division problems until late in the afternoon. "No wonder kids are like they are today," they'll say.

Kids today, when they grow up, might tell their grandchildren how their devoted teachers made them program the classroom computers or translate a TV news story for the Latino boy next to them. "And we did it, we liked it, and we never forgot it."

On these pages, North Carolina students tell why they like their schools today. There are many more that won't fit into the space we have, such as the one from Kyle Smithwick, a Belhaven boy who starts his essay: "When I go to school, the electricity is working great . . . We are able to see our work." Or the one from 12-year-old Kristin Pearce in Boone, who writes about "old man Mr. Miller" who caught her passing notes to friends and Ms. Osborne ("she was always in style"). Kristin declares, "I was always a dork, but now I am cool."

Several teachers assigned their classes to write essays on "Why I Like My School," and sent us the results. "We are doing this as a computer lab assignment," writes Iris Blevins and Judy Moss from Mountain View Elementary in Jefferson, "therefore all entries will be e-mailed. This writing was a homework assignment and it was an excellent opportunity to use keyboarding and e-mail skills."

You can see more of these confessions on our Web site at www.CarolinaCountry.com in the Tar Heel Tales section.

Next month we'll publish some of the photos you have sent us. (Deadline was July 15.) In October we'll run some of the best fish stories you ever heard. See the year's remaining themes and rules on page 17.

— Michael Gery

Like peanut butter and jelly at Parkwood Middle School

"RRRRRING!" screams the school bell.

"Get in your seat or you will be tardy," says Mrs. Bartell.

Most kids think, "Here comes another tiresome and tedious day." Sometimes I feel like that too, but most of the time, school is one of the most exciting parts of my day.

Going to dances is one of the most fun-filled things about school. I know, it might not have much to do with school, but it still has something to do with school. The dances are just right time-wise. If they were only one hour, that wouldn't seem enough, but three hours is just as right as peanut butter and jelly. The DJ there is great! He plays all the good songs from the fastest to the slowest. He also plays whatever we request. The food at the dances is pretty good. It's a little expensive, but worth the money. Also, all my friends go to the dances.

The gym at Parkwood Middle is 10 times better than gym at the elementary school. The games are so much more enjoyable here. I enjoy prison ball, spider ball and volleyball. The gym teachers are always funny and try to play the games with us (even though they are three or four times our age!). Most of the time we play Mr. Coble's class in kickball, baseball or softball. Our class always beats them about 50 points to nothing.

"RRRRRING!" shouts the bell again.

It's time to go home. It has been another great day at school. Wait! — It's Friday and there's a dance tonight — YES!!

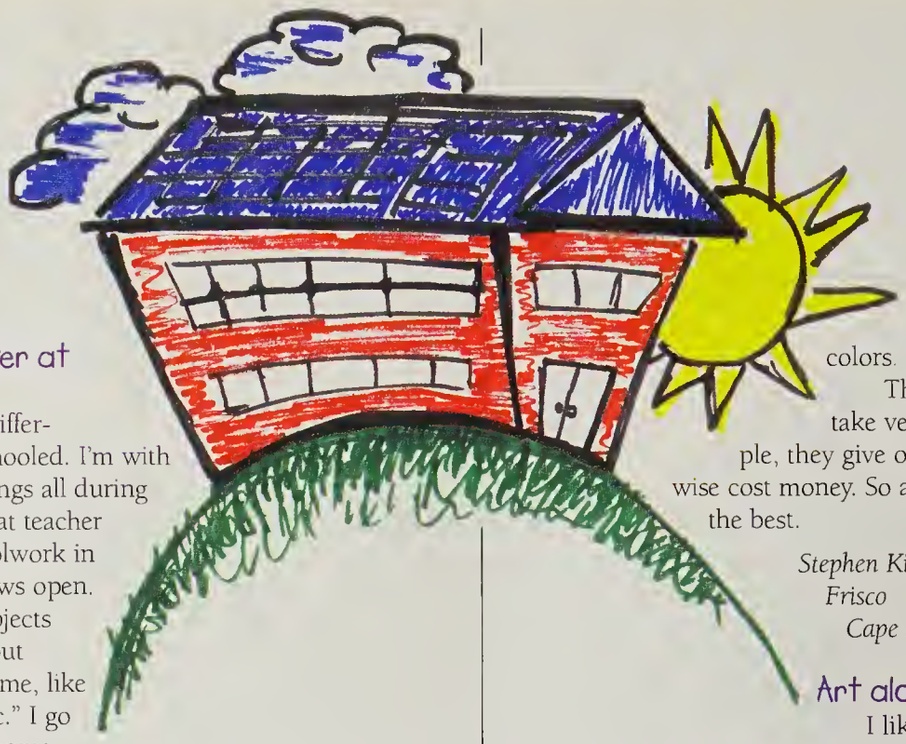
Hank Howie
Waxhaw
Union Power Cooperative

Learning everything at Pungo Christian Academy

The reason I like my school is because the teachers are nice, and I love to learn different things like history, science, spelling, Bible, language and math. I think history is the hardest because we are learning about armies. Math is easy because we are learning about angles and measuring them. Science is very fun because we are learning about the solar system. Language is neat because we just got through learning about poems. In Bible we learn everything. Spelling is dealing with antonyms and synonyms. Spelling is my best subject. I also like going outside and playing kickball and swinging on the swings and sliding on the slide.

Kelly Dozier
Plymouth
Tideland EMC

(Continued on next page)



The protective shelter at The Home School

My school is really different because I'm home schooled. I'm with my parents and four siblings all during the day. My mom is a great teacher who lets me do my schoolwork in my room with the windows open.

I study the usual subjects but I also get to learn about things that really interest me, like the sinking of the "Titanic." I go on field trips with other home schoolers and do lots of fun activities. We school year-round, taking a break every month and vacations in the spring and fall.

Although I'm going into eighth grade, I'm not exposed to swearing, sex, drugs or alcohol. I don't worry about weapons, violence, bullies or bomb threats.

I have good Christian friends who are great influences on me. We have God as the center of our school, and we can read our Bibles and pray freely. Home schooling is great, and I wish that more people would do it.

Helen Noelle Carroll
Pink Hill
Tri-County Electric

With the Letter People

I like my school because I like my principal and I like my teachers, too. I like my school because we have group time. In group time we talk about the Letter People. My favorite is Mr. M because that is what my name starts with. When I was 3 or 4, I don't remember how old, the fire truck came to see us at school, and the firemen came to my class, and we watched a movie about in case we have a fire. The firemen told us not to be scared of them when they come into our house if it is on fire, because they will help us. That's all.

Madison Woschkolup, age 4 1/2
Charlotte
Union Electric Power Cooperative

Safe on the sound at Cape Hatteras Middle School

I like my school because my teachers are my friends. Sometimes my teachers get mad at me because of my big mouth, but then I shut up. I know that teachers cannot always be perfect. They sometimes mess up on grading papers, and I understand that. I even think that most all teachers are really brave for going into a career like teaching. I would probably go nuts if I had to put up with all the stuff my teachers deal with.

Our school is clean. The janitors take very good care of our school, and I'm thankful for that. I also feel very safe in my school because it is small, and ever since I've been here there have never been any big violence issues. I'm very thankful for that.

Our school also had tons of team spirit. Our gym is always full of spectators for the sports games. We also have a school color day where everybody wears school colors.

The nurses at our school also take very good care of us. For example, they give out free shots that would otherwise cost money. So all in all, I think my school is the best.

Stephen King, age 6
Frisco
Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative

Art alone in Asheboro

I like my school because of art class. I plan to be an artist when I grow up. I am good at drawing frogs, crosses and other kinds of drawings. In art, my favorite thing to do is make pottery. It is fun to design your own things and to see what it turns out as. If we didn't have art, I don't know what I would do! Every day after art class I am always looking forward to the next week. Every year I get better and better.

Bianca Mashburn
Asheboro
Randolph EMC

The cafeteria, the playground and the pretty teacher

It was my first day of school, and I was nervous. I was so nervous that I did 50 back flips! Until I saw my teacher — she was drop-dead gorgeous. We chatted and she seemed pretty nice.

Then I recognized an enormous playground. I couldn't wait to play on it. After that, I got to make new friends with other kids. That was a blast.

Then it was time to explore the cafeteria. I knew already that was going to be my favorite part of the school when I smelled the delicious food cooking. By the smell I could tell it was pizza, one of my favorites. When I found a place to eat with my new friends, I gobbled up my food in a jiffy. When lunch was over it was 2 p.m., and school was over in 45 minutes. So then I played on the computer.

That day I learned that school can be fun. And I love it!

Marisa Beam, age 9
Denver
EnergyUnited

Strict teachers at The Sparta School

I like my elementary school because it has a good learning environment. Another reason I like my school is because of the strict teachers.

My school has a natural habitat where we have built birdhouses for birds. We have a marsh for frogs and other creatures. In this habitat, we can learn about the metamorphosis of a frog and butterfly.

Our classrooms are big. We have access to at least two computers in each classroom. Our media center has a large variety and levels of books. Some of the upper grades also have access to video equipment.

The teachers are strict in making sure we get our homework and school work done. They are also nice to us when we get our work done and when we are on task.

Shannon Stolt
Sparta

The closeness at Western Harnett High School

Standing outside looking at my high school, you might ask, "What is so great about this school? There are all these mobile units and too many teenagers." Well, that may be, but once inside you will see why I love my school.

Yes, there are occasional conflicts, but for the most part the students at my school have had to overcome tragedy after tragedy this year, which has brought us all closer together. There have been two bright young ladies killed in car crashes this year. These events traumatized our school, but brought us all closer together. Now when we leave school for the day everyone is sure to get their "good-byes" and their " be carefuls" in.

Yes, my school might have 20 mobile units outside and 1,500 students in a school not built for not nearly that many, but we also have love and respect for one another. What better lesson could we be taught in high school than that?

Cassie Barefoot, age 18
Spring Lake
South River EMC

Fitting in at Morehead City Middle School

I attend Morehead City Middle School. I am a 6th grader, so it is my first year there. At the beginning of the year, I wasn't so sure about things. It was hard changing classes and getting used to having so many teachers with different demands. Plus, I was still new to Morehead City and didn't know many kids.

However, what was once scary and unfamiliar soon became fun and challenging. Lots of fun goes on at the Middle School. We have great programs. We have the coolest band program —- I play the clarinet! We go on trips and do really awesome fund-raisers like selling discount cards that give you discounts in restaurants and shops. We also have a great Pep Club, where we talk about fun events that are coming up and make decorations for things like dances and school spirit week.

Another reason I love my school is because of the friendly atmosphere, from the principal, Mrs. Lloyd, to the teachers and staff. They give you a sense of belonging. I feel like I can always go to someone if I have a problem. And I have made so many new friends that I can hardly remember life before MCMS.

Maggie Forman
Pine Knoll Shores
Carteret-Craven Electric

Praying for others at Copeland Elementary School

I go to Copeland Elementary School. I like my school because if anyone is sick or someone in the school staff's family passes away or becomes ill, the principal will get on the intercom and say that we should pray for these people. I am grateful that he likes to pray for others.

I also like my school because of the wonderful faculty and staff. The teachers here are the nicest teachers in the world. You can find some very nice, creative and interesting people at Copeland.

Adrienne Shae Harvey
Siloam
Surry-Yadkin EMC

Illustrations by Nicole Ferrari

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The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. Only one entry per household per month.
3. E-mail or typed, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
4. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
5. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. *(We will not return others.)*
6. We pay $50 for each submission published.
7. We will post on our Web site more entries than we publish, but can't pay for those submissions.
8. Send to Nothing Finer, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616. Or by e-mail: carolina.country@ncemcs.com. Or through the Web site: www.carolinacountry.com

October

"My Best Fish Story"
Even if it got away
Deadline: Aug. 15

November

"The Finest Family Recipe"
Your best recipe and the story behind it
Deadline: Sept. 15

December

"Our Finest Family Tradition"
Passed down through the years
Deadline: Oct. 15

Carolina Close-Up

Compiled by Renee Gannon

Personal watercraft users must heed new use rules this summer

Last December, the N.C. General Assembly enacted a new personal watercraft law affecting who can operate a personal watercraft (PWC) and how it is operated.

No one under 12 years old can operate a PWC in North Carolina waters. Persons between 12 and 16 years old can operate a PWC if they are riding with a person who is at least 18 years old, or the youth has successfully completed an approved boating safety education course (proof of age and safety course completion must be carried by the youth during operation of the PWC).

PWCs must be operated at all times in a reasonable and prudent manner. Maneuvers that endanger people or property constitute reckless operation, including: unreasonable or unnecessary weaving through congested boat traffic; jumping the wake of a vessel within 100 feet of the vessel or when visibility is obstructed; intentionally approaching a vessel in order to swerve at the last moment; operating at faster than no-wake speed within 100 feet of an anchored or moored vessel, the shoreline, a dock, pier, swim float, swimming area, swimmers, surfers, anglers or manually-propelled boat; following a vessel, including another PWC, too closely; and no one can operate a PWC on state waters between sunset and sunrise.

Boating safety courses are available. For information on courses, contact the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, (919) 733-7192; the U.S. Power Squadron, (888) 367-8777 and www.usps.org; the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, (800) 336-2626 and www.uscgaux.org; and the Boat/U.S. free online course at www.boatus.com.

How to put the Lookout Light on your license plate

If you're interested in having the image of Cape Lookout Lighthouse on your North Carolina vehicle license plate, contact the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum in Harkers Island.

For an additional $30 beyond your normal tag fee, you can get the special issue license tag marking historic landmarks in North Carolina. Of that additional $30, the state donates $20 to the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum.

Artist's interpretation of plate design.

To reserve your tag, call the museum and ask for the "historical/state attraction" application form. Once you get the form and complete it, send $30 for your reservation by Sept. 1. The museum needs a minimum of 300 reservations to order the first set of license plates.

The $30 then becomes an annual fee that is billed to you by the Department of Motor Vehicles in accordance with the current schedule for renewing your plates. Typically, renewal fees for conventional cars cost $25, and the $30 for the special plate is additional because of the donation it produces for the museum. The state DMV will coordinate your renewal date with the actual issue date of these tags, so you won't lose any time on your own renewal schedule.

Applications will be accepted after Sept. 1, but may not be among the first 300 submitted to the state.

The Core Sound Waterfowl Museum is under construction on Harkers Island where it will offer a showcase and educational opportunity for the cultural heritage of North Carolina's Down East communities. The Cape Lookout Lighthouse, the barrier islands and the Core Sound all are symbols for the life of those communities.

For the license plate application form, contact Core Sound Waterfowl Museum at (252) 728-1500. E-mail: amspacher@mail.clis.com. Or visit the Web site at www.coresound.com

Cooking contest calls for chicken chefs

The National Chicken Cooking Contest is looking for chicken recipes that could win prizes up to $25,000 and an expense-paid trip to Sacramento, Calif. An independent panel of judges will select a finalist from each state and the District of Columbia. Each finalist wins a trip to California to compete in the National Cook-Off on April 6, 2001. A panel of food writers and editors from leading publications will judge the cook-off. Entries are judged on the basis of taste, appearance, simplicity and appeal.

Chicken is the only required ingredient for recipes, and it can be prepared whole, in parts or in any combination of parts. Recipes using marinated chicken, cooked chicken and ground chicken are also allowed. All recipes must be original, make four to eight servings and take no more than three hours to prepare twice —- one for judging and one for display. No grilling recipes are allowed because of fire regulations.

Entry blanks are available by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: N.C. Poultry Federation, 4020 Barrett Dr., Suite 102, Raleigh, NC 27609. Applications are also available at the National Chicken Council Website www.eatchicken.com. Participants can enter as many recipes as desired, as long as each entry is separate. It is not necessary to use an entry blank as long as each entry is on a separate sheet of paper with the name of the recipe and participant's name, address and telephone number.

Deadline for entries is October 15. Entries should be mailed to: Chicken Contest, Box 28158, Washington, DC 20038-8158.

WIC program offers help to low-income parents

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) provides food to babies, children and new moms. Food items include milk, cheese, juice, cereal, infant formula and more. Parents also receive free nutrition counseling and breastfeeding advice.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service administers the WIC program. Most state WIC programs provide vouchers that participants use at authorized food stores. A wide variety of state and local organizations cooperate in providing the food and health care benefits. To find out if you qualify for the program, call (828) 264-6641 or your local health department.

Looking for Century Farms

The N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is seeking applicants for the Century Farm program. Century Farms are farms that have remained in one family for 100 years or more. Of the 58,000 farms in the state, only about 1,400 are recognized as Century Farms.

Families whose farms are recognized as Century Farms receive a plaque and a certificate, and are also invited to attend a reunion at the N.C. State Fair every five years.

Applications for Century Farms are accepted year-round. However, to be included in the 2000 reunion, applications must be received by September 1. Applications can be faxed or mailed to you by calling the NCDA&CS Public Affairs office at (919) 733-4216. Applications are also available at the department's Web site at www.ncagr.com/paffairs.

"Buck-os and Lady Misses:" Life in the Blue Ridge Mountains

Musicians Brooke and George Buckner accompany actress Barbara Bates Smith in the production of "Buck-os and Lady Misses" at the Folk Art Center.

The Southern Highland Craft Guild presents a dramatic and musical interpretation of stories about life in the Blue Ridge Mountains, as written by North Carolina poet laureate Fred Chappell.

"Buck-os and Lady Misses," performed at the Folk Art Center in Asheville August 4-6, 11-13 and 18-20, brings to life some of Chappell's best-loved narratives about growing up in Haywood County. The stories are told by regional actress Barbara Bates Smith and accompanied by two regional musicians.

Performances begin at 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, and at 3 p.m. on Sundays. Tickets are $10, with children 10 and under free. For more information, call the Folk Art Center at (828) 298-7928, or visit the Website www.southernhighlandguild.org.

Shop online and support the Blue Ridge Parkway

At the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation's Web site, www.brpfoundation.org, visitors can shop from a list of participating e-businesses and at the same time provide funding for the parkway.

The online shopping village companies donate 5 to 15 percent of each purchase automatically to the foundation, at no extra cost to the consumer or organization. Prices are the same is if the shopper went directly to the e-business site. Popular online shopping sites such as Amazon.com, ToysRUs.com, Flower.com, Buy.com, L.L. Bean, Gap, Land's End, Pets.com and others are available.

Farmer's Day in Robbins

The Moore County town of Robbins will celebrate the 45th annual Farmer's Day on August 3-5. The event kicks off Thursday evening with local gospel groups performing from 6:30-9:30 p.m. Live entertainment continues on Friday at 6 p.m., with bluegrass and country bands, street dances, clogging and square dancing. A pottery auction will also be held that evening at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday activities include various arts and crafts, carnival rides, rock wall climbing, horses, petting zoo, pony rides, pottery turning, train rides, highway safety and DWI exhibits. Concessions will also be available. The Bull Blast Rodeo will also be held Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m.

The Farmer's Day Parade is scheduled for Saturday at 11 a.m. The parade is one of the largest horse parades on the East Coast, with more than 600 horses. Miss North Carolina and Miss Moore County, bands and the N.C. State University Bagpipes and Drums Corps are also scheduled in the parade.

For more information, call (910) 948-3746.

Good news about North Carolina blueberries

Ongoing research indicates that blueberries are higher in antioxidant activity than more than 40 other fruits, juices and vegetables. Blueberries are also high in fiber and vitamin C, and low in calories. And you can just wash and eat them.

Healthy news is good news for North Carolina's blueberry producers, who produce 12-13 million pounds of the berries per year. The blueberry season runs from June through August. The North Carolina Blueberry Council suggests the following when buying fresh blueberries: choose the ones that appear plump, unwrinkled and free of leaves and stems; the bigger the berry, the sweeter it will be, but that doesn't necessarily mean better flavor; powder on berries is called the bloom, which protects the fruit from the sun and will fade as the berries age (it does not rinse off); once purchased, cover and place the berries in the refrigerator; blueberries will generally keep up to two weeks in the refrigerator when stored correctly, and can be frozen for year-round use.

For more information about blueberry production, local pick-your-own farms and recipes, contact the N.C. Blueberry Council, c/o Southeast Marketing Center, PO Box 974, Roseboro, NC 28382, or call (910) 525-3444.

Wake Forest girl will take her conservation poster to the national level

Samantha Clarke of Wake Forest will represent North Carolina in a national conservation poster competition in December. As a 5th grader at Jones Dairy Elementary School, Samantha created a poster that won the top prize at county, district and state levels, earning $250 in prizes.

Her poster depicts a variety of conservation methods that farmers practice to reduce soil erosion and protect North Carolina's streams, lakes and rivers. The program is sponsored by the N.C. Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Her 5th grade class, taught by Elizabeth Katona, participated in the poster contest last fall under the auspices of the Wake Soil and Water Conservation District.

Samantha is the daughter of Jeff and Susan Clarke, members of Wake Electric Membership Corporation.

Nicole L. Ferrari

A time to eat green beans

By Gene Corpening

So we just hunker down, hoping nobody will notice

When I was about seven, one day at the table, my father discovered that I did not eat green beans. Maybe he felt it was un-American, but for whatever the reason, he was offended. As a physician, he believed he knew what everyone should eat, and so, he ordered me to eat some green beans.

What followed was, for me, a very bad scene. Being forced to eat something that I did not wish to eat was bad enough, but being forced to eat that item in front of my brothers and sisters and Mother made it much worse. It was a traumatic happening. Yes, I cried. And, looking back on it today, I don't remember any sympathy or protest being offered from anyone, not even from Mother, who had always been there when I needed her.

Trying to cope the best I knew how, I would put a small portion of a green bean in my mouth and wash it down with milk as fast as possible. While this encounter was horrible, the worst part was that Dad decided to make it a long-term project. I would have to eat green beans each day until I learned to like them. My short-term strategy was to stay away from the table when green beans were on the menu. But that defense was weak. I remember one day Tom and Barbara, a brother and sister, were sent next door to a neighbor's house to find me, and I had to go home and eat green beans.

Sometime after that, a strange thing happened. My brother Tom and a mutual friend, Harry Woosely, and I were playing down by the Billy Branch one afternoon when Tom discovered a vine-like plant, which he identified as sassafras. "It's good to chew on," he said. "To get the juice out of it." So Tom began to chew on the

plant, and Harry did the same. They invited me to share in this bounty, but I declined. And it was a good thing I did, because what they were chewing on was either poison oak or poison ivy. The next day, they were almost unrecognizable. But they were lucky. They recovered rather quickly and did not have to go to the hospital.

Of course, Dad, being Tom's physician, got the full story about what had happened, and it left me looking pretty good, because I, the youngest of the three, had enough sense not to eat a strange plant out in the woods. And then came a miracle: The green beans problem went away. It seems that Dad suddenly decided I was old enough to make up my own mind about what to eat. But that's not the end of the story.

The years went by. And there was one food that I simply did not touch—green beans. When visiting a relative's house, if they put green beans on my plate, I didn't say anything about it. I just didn't eat them. So, more years went by. Dad died at the age of 87, and a few years later a certain thought entered my mind: What if green beans taste *good?* It hit me like an avalanche! Oh, my gosh! Had I been punished twice? Once because I *had* to eat green beans and again because I *didn't* eat them? What if Dad had said, "You will drink coffee and learn to like pizza?" I was faced with a moment of truth. A certain belief seems to rest comfortably in everybody's mind. We all think we are open-minded. If given the facts, we sincerely believe we can, without undue prejudice, reach a reasonable and fair conclusion. If that's the way you see yourself, I won't argue with you, but it might not hurt to get a second opinion.

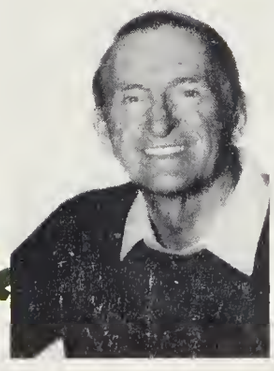
A few days later, I was going down the buffet line at the local Kountry Kitchen, and with strange emotions whirling around in my head, I took out a small portion of green beans. Sitting there at the table, I was again "forced" to eat green beans. But to my surprise, the beans did not taste as bad as I had remembered. I was shocked! I managed to eat the entire serving. A few days later, I took out another helping. Trying to be as fair and objective about the experiment as possible, I was willing to concede that green beans did have a fresh garden taste about them. A few days later, I ate some more, and days later, still some more. It did not take forever. Being open-minded, of course, I was willing to admit that green beans taste good. And since that day, I eat them quite often. I guess in everybody's life, there's a time to eat green beans, a time to let go of your pride. And it ain't always that easy.

But how many people are blessed with that talent? Most of the time, once our beliefs have set like concrete, we find ourselves in a pit. And we dare not climb out of that pit, because someone might ask, "What were you doing in that pit in the first place?" And we'd rather not have to explain. So we just hunker down, hoping nobody will notice. But what we don't realize is that the pit we have dug for ourselves often has a bottom of quicksand. And the longer we wait to climb out, the deeper we sink.

Trying to see the big picture, I know some people would say that any parent who forces a child to eat an item that is not a medicine would be guilty of child abuse. But I feel compelled to see another side. You might call it being Dad's attorney. Dad was the way he was. That's what made him work his way through medical school and support a very large family in—by the standards of those mid-1930s Depression years—a comfortable life style and send all the children to college. Yes, he was very opinionated. If he liked a food and you didn't, then there was "something wrong with your taster." But aren't we all opinionated? Wouldn't we be dull, if we weren't? And don't let it slip by your notice, Dad *was* open-minded. He gave up on the green beans project, didn't he?

I don't want to overlook Mother as an influence in my life. She was one of my heroes. But every now and then someone will tell me, "You look just like your father." My vanity wants to hear that I look like myself; I am my own person. But I understand the kindness in their words. So I smile and thank them. I know a compliment when I hear one.

It seems that Dad suddenly decided I was old enough to make up my own mind about what to eat.



Gene Corpening writes in his hometown of Granite Falls. He can be reached at P.O. Box 257, Granite Falls, NC 28630. E:mail: alicepub@conninc.com

Teenage Drivers

By Elizabeth Hunter

The turtle had just crossed the yellow line when I rounded the curve. Unlike some I've seen trying to cross a highway —- standing motionless, necks extended, as if they had all the time in the world to assess the lay of the asphalt —- this one was on the move. Still, I automatically looked for a place to pull over. My car needs a modified version of that bumper sticker: "Caution, this vehicle brakes for yard sales."

Even with no traffic in sight, I wanted to move the turtle out of harm's way. Within the previous fortnight, I'd noticed the crushed shells of three others on my rural road. It was mid-June, a time when Eastern box turtles seek mates and relocate to their summer ranges. I knew the rule about moving turtles: that you transfer them to the side of the road they're headed for, because they know where they're going. If you instead return one to the shoulder it just left, it will head back into the traffic.

The two-lane road I was traveling snaked sinuously along a steep hillside, with little shoulder on either side. Since nothing was coming, I didn't bother to pull over — just threw the car in neutral, pulled on the hand brake and jumped out. By the time I reached the turtle, he was halfway across the oncoming lane. Perhaps, I thought, this one could have made it on his own.

Then I heard a motor's hum. Rounding the curve in front of me was a sleek, late-model red car of a sort whose appeal is lost on me, a car for the heedless young. Good thing I'd stopped. I raised one hand like a traffic cop. The car slowed. I reached down and scooped the turtle up.

Some turtles retreat into their shells when you handle them. Not this one. A beautiful, full-grown male, his dark shell was splashed with bold yellow streaks and blotches; his neck, legs and head were brilliant orange. He paddled the air furiously, clawing my hand, his fiery glare suggesting I was just the kind of thing that ruined his day.

I hurried across in front of the car, found a good spot a few feet up the bramble and weed-covered slope and set the turtle down. He chugged off as soon as his feet hit dirt, without a backward glance.

Even with the turtle and me out of the way, the red car hadn't started up. As I recrossed in front of it, the driver rolled down her window. Behind the wheel was a snub-nosed teenager, her blond hair pulled back in a ponytail, her dark green golf shirt sporting a pizza parlor logo in white.

"Hey, thanks for stopping!" I was about to launch into a brief lesson on the natural history of turtles when she said something I didn't quite catch.

"Pardon me?" I said.

"I came back to move that turtle out of the road."

"Came back?"

"There wasn't any place to pull over . . ."

I nodded, gesturing vaguely at my car.

". . . so I had to find a place to turn around."

"Well, you can move the next one," I said lamely. By the time her meaning dawned, she'd rolled up her window and was easing down the road.

Well before we reached the main highway, she caught up with me; she passed me in the first straightaway. Turning around to help the turtle must have made her late for work.

I doubt I'd recognize that girl if I saw her again. But I think of her every time I pass the high school and see a line of cars like hers at the light, or when a fresh-faced teen takes my order at a fast-food counter. Memories of that day in June are helping me steer clear of the old, easy assumptions I used to make about people their age. What strikes me now is how much like turtles teenagers are —- learning to navigate territory that's daunting, perilous and new. How, underneath the splashy shells they favor, behind that smoked glass, metallic paint and gaudy detailing, are limbs as easily shattered, hearts as easily crushed, and spirits as in need of a lift as any hapless turtle trying to cross a road. Surely I can do what that girl did: slow down, turn around, try to help.

Elizabeth Hunter is a freelance writer in Mitchell County and a member of French Broad Electric Membership Corporation.

August

MOUNTAINS

"Horn in the West"
Through Aug. 12, Boone
Outdoor drama, (828) 264-2120

Shadow of the Hills
Through Aug. 12, West Jefferson
Art exhibit, Ashe County Arts Council, (336) 246-ARTS

Southern Highland Craft Guild
Celebration
Through Aug. 20, Asheville
Celebrating 70 years, Folk Art Center, (828) 298-7928, www.southernhighlandguild.org

Southern Highland Craft Guild
Through Aug. 20, Asheville
Dream Basket exhibit, Folk Art Center, (828) 298-7928, www.southernhighlandguild.org

Music on Main Street
Through Aug. 25, Hendersonville
Historic courthouse lawn, Main Street, every Friday night, 7-9 p.m., free, (828) 693-9708

The Blue Ridge Reunion: The Fine Art & Craftwork of Jackson County
Through Aug. 31, Balsam
Art exhibit and sale, Balsam Mountain Inn, free, 10 a.m.-9 p.m., (828) 452-4864

Southern Highland Craft Guild
Through Sept. 10, Asheville
Bald Eagle exhibit, Folk Art Center, (828) 298-7928, www.southernhighlandguild.org

Flora and Fauna Imagery in Craft
Through Sept. 10, Asheville
Folk Art Center, (828) 298-7928, www.southernhighlandguild.org

Summer Music
July 31- Aug. 5, Blowing Rock
Chamber music festival, (828) 295-3505

"Oklahoma!"
Aug. 2-20, Flat Rock
Musical, Flat Rock Playhouse, (828) 693-0731

N.C. Mineral and Gem Festival
Aug. 3-6, Spruce Pine
Pinebridge Coliseum and Pinebridge Inn Executive Center, (800) 227-3912, www.mitchell-county.com

Sidewalk Art Show & Sale
Aug. 4-5, Flat Rock
Main Street, (828) 696-7926

Mt. Mitchell Crafts Fair
Aug. 4-5, Burnsville
(800) 948-1632, www.yanceychamber.com

Junaluska Singers Concert
Aug. 4-6, Lake Junaluska
Stuart Auditorium, 8 p.m., (828) 452-2881

Buck-os and Lady Misses
Aug. 4-6, 11-13, 18-20, Asheville
Music and drama, Folk Art Center, (828) 298-7928, www.southernhighlandguild.org

Music On Main Street
Aug. 4, 11, 18, 25, Flat Rock
Visitors Information Center, (828) 693-9708

Firefly Festival
Aug. 5, Boone
12-6 p.m., (828) 264-2120

Joe Hasty & Centerpiece in Concert
Aug. 5, Sparta
Sparta Auditorium, 8 p.m., $8, (800) 372-5473

Turtle Talks
Aug. 5, Pisgah Forest
Pisgah Center for Wildlife Education, 10-11:30 a.m., free, (828) 877-4423, http://pisgah.state.nc.us/

Bluegrass & Ole Time Fiddlers Convention
Aug. 5, West Jefferson
Ashe County Park, 5 p.m.-12 a.m., (828) 877-1898

Crafts on the Green
Aug. 5, Beech Mountain
At Fred's, (828) 898-5605

Millennium Tour of Homes
Aug. 5, Flat Rock
In Historic area, (828) 697-5111

Village Days 2000, Collectors Day
Aug. 5, Maggie Valley
Cabbage Rose, (828) 926-3079

Smokey the Bear's Birthday Party
Aug. 5, Pisgah Forest
The Cradle of Forestry, (828) 877-3130, www.cradleofforestry.com

Balloon Glow Festival
Aug. 5, Belmont
Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden, (704) 825-4490, www.dsbg.org

Sidewalk Yard Sale
Aug. 5, Marion
Downtown Main St., free, (828) 652-2215

Summer Wildflowers
Aug. 5, Marion
Guided hike around Lake James State Park, 10 a.m., free, (828) 652-5047

Bluegrass Festival
Aug. 5, Hiddenite
Benefits Hospice, Gwaltney Community Ballfield, 5 p.m., (828) 632-3378

Wildflowers
Aug. 5, Chimney Rock
Guided, Chimney Rock Park, (800) 277-9611, www.chimneyrockpark.com

Riders in the Sky Concert
Aug. 5-6, Blowing Rock
Tweetsie Railroad, 12 p.m. and 3 p.m., (828) 264-9061

Summer Music Series of the Alleghany
Aug. 5, 19, Sept. 2, Sparta 8 p.m., (828) 363-6008

Shakespearean Children's Pageant
Aug. 6, Asheville
Thomas Wolfe Memorial, 2 p.m., (828) 253-8304

Bed and Breakfast Tour and Tea
Aug. 9, Asheville
(828) 253-8304

Penland School of Crafts Benefit
Auction
Aug. 11-12, Penland
(800) 227-3912, www.mitchell-county.com

Rummage Sale
Aug. 11-12, Boone
Benefits Watauga Humane Society, at National Guard Armory, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., (828) 297-4294

Hummingbird Happenings
Aug. 11-13, Belmont
Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden, (704) 825-4490, www.dsbg.org

Late Bloomers
Aug. 12, Pisgah Forest
Pisgah Center for Wildlife Education, 1-4 p.m., free, (828) 877-4423, http://pisgah.state.nc.us/

Wood Day
Aug. 12, Asheville
Folk Art Center, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., (828) 298-7928, www.southernhighlandguild.org

Art in the Park
Aug. 12, Blowing Rock
Arts and crafts, (828) 295-7851

Antique & Collectibles Fair
Aug. 12, Canton
Main & Park Streets, 9 a.m., (828) 648-7925

Fox Den Trail Hike
Aug. 12, Marion
Guided hike around Lake James State Park, 10 a.m., free, (828) 652-5047

Equestrian Show
Aug. 12, Marion
McDowell Saddle and Bridle Club Show Grounds, 6 p.m., $2, 12 and under free, (828) 738-3738

CAROLINA COMPASS

The Fabulous Ink Spots in Concert
Aug. 12, West Jefferson
Ashe Civic Center, 7:30 p.m., $10, (336) 246-4483

Junaluska Singers Christmas in August Concert
Aug. 13, Lake Junaluska
Stuart Auditorium, 8 p.m., $10, (828) 452-2881

Toe River Arts Council Art Auction
Aug. 13, Spruce Pine
Mayland Community College, 12-3:30 p.m., $5, (828) 682-7215

George Hamilton IV in Concert
Aug. 13, West Jefferson
Ashe Civic Center, 2 p.m., $10, (336) 246-4483

Larry's Annual Jazz Festival
Aug. 16-19, Maggie Valley
Saratoga's Café, 8 p.m., reservations required, (828) 926-1448

Reflections: Interiors/Exteriors
Aug. 16-Sept. 30, West Jefferson
Art exhibit, Ashe Arts Center, (336) 246-ARTS

Craft Show
Aug. 17-20, Flat Rock
Blue Ridge Mall, (828) 697-1745

Mt. Jefferson Challenge
Aug. 18, West Jefferson
Bike ride, starts at Ashe Civic Center, 6 p.m., (828) 246-4483

"The Women"
Aug. 18-27, Waynesville
Drama, Performing Arts Center, (828) 456-6322

Miniature Horse Race
Aug. 19, Taylorsville
Bryant Farm, 7 p.m., free, (828) 632-3043

Splish Splash
Aug. 19, Pisgah Forest
Pisgah Center for Wildlife Education, 9 a.m.-12 p.m., free, (828) 877-4423, http://pisgah.state.nc.us/

Blue Ridge Brutal 100
Aug. 19, West Jefferson
12K, 50-mile and 100-mile bike rides, starts at Ashe Civic Center, 7 a.m. registration, (828) 246-4483

West End Mambo
Aug. 19, Sparta
Latin music, Sparta Auditorium, 8 p.m., $8, (800) 372-5473

Coffee House Talent Night
Aug. 19, West Jefferson
Jefferson Methodist Church, 7:30 p.m., (828) 246-ARTS

Mountain Bike Race
Aug. 19-20, Sugar Mountain
(828) 898-5605

Cruso Quilt Show
Aug. 19, 25-26, Canton
Cruso Community building, Hwy. 276, (828) 648-7925

"Here on the Flight Path"
Aug. 23-Sept. 3, Flat Rock
Play, Flat Rock Playhouse, (828) 693-0731

Pasta Feed
Aug. 25, Maggie Valley
Dinner, 5-7 p.m., $6, (828) 926-8021

Fine Art Festival
Aug. 25-27, Banner Elk
(828) 898-5605

Endangered Species and You
Aug. 26, Pisgah Forest
Pisgah Center for Wildlife Education, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., free, (828) 877-4423, http://pisgah.state.nc.us/

Mount Mitchell Heritage Day
Aug. 26, Mount Mitchell
Mount Mitchell State Park, (828) 675-4611, www.mitchell-county.com

Moonlight Race
Aug. 26, Maggie Valley
8K race, 8:30 p.m., $15 registration fee, (828) 926-1686

Haywood Gospel Jubilee
Aug. 26, Canton
Canton Recreation Park, 6 p.m., (828) 648-7925

"Spiders"
Aug. 26, Marion
Discussion and hike, Lake James State Park, 10 a.m., free, (828) 652-5047

Fair on the Square
Aug. 26, Burnsville
(800) 948-1632, www.yanceychamber.com

Emile Pandolfi in Concert
Aug. 26, West Jefferson
Ashe Civic Center, (828) 246-ARTS

Hunter Safety Course
Aug. 29-31, Pisgah Forest
Pisgah Center for Wildlife Education, 6-9:30 p.m., free, (828) 877-4423, http://pisgah.state.nc.us/

Labor Day Celebration
Aug. 31-Sept. 4, Canton
Canton Recreation Park, (828) 648-7925

Mountain Home Music Concert
Sept. 2, West Jefferson
Ashe Civic Center, 7:30 p.m., $10, (336) 246-4483

Pandean Players Wind Quartet
Sept. 2, Sparta
Concert, Sparta Auditorium, 8 p.m., free, (800) 372-5473

PIEDMONT

"Pathway to Freedom"
Through August 11, Snow Camp
Call for dates and times, Snow Camp Outdoor Theatre, (336) 376-6948

"The Sword of Peace"
Through August 12, Snow Camp
Call for dates and times, Snow Camp Outdoor Theatre, (336) 376-6948

NASA: The Tar Heel Connection
Through Aug. 12, Oxford
Granville County Museum, (919) 693-9706

To Have and To Hold: 135 Years of Wedding Fashions
Through Aug. 13, Charlotte
Mint Museum of Art, (704) 337-2000, www.mintmuseum.org

Rodin Exhibit: The Thinker and other works
Through Aug. 13, Raleigh
N.C. Museum of Art, (919) 839-6262

Search for Queen Anne's Revenge
Through Aug. 21, Charlotte
Blackbeard exhibit, Discovery Place, (704) 372-6261, www.discoveryplace.org

The USS Monitor
Through Aug. 21, Charlotte
Exhibit, Discovery Place, (704) 372-6261, www.discoveryplace.org

How Things Work
Through Aug. 31, Durham
Interactive exhibit, Museum of Life and Science, (919) 220-5429

Little Brides: The Golden Age of Fashion Dolls, 1950-1970
Through Sept. 1, Charlotte
Mint Museum of Art, (704) 337-2000, www.mintmuseum.org

Carolina Butterfly Pavilion
Through Oct. 1, Durham
Museum of Life and Science, (919) 220-5429

Farmer's Day and Wagon Train Festival/Parade
Aug. 3-5, Robbins
(910) 948-3746

Hospice of Davidson County
Fundraiser
Aug. 4, Lexington
Truck raffle, dinner, auction, (336) 248-6185

Cedric the Entertainer
Aug. 4, Fayetteville
Cumberland Co. Coliseum Complex, (910) 323-5088

"Smoke on the Mountain"
Aug. 4-6, Mount Airy
Musical, Andy Griffith Playhouse, (336) 786-7998

Macedonia Connection
Aug. 4-Sept. 3, Fayetteville
Art exhibit, Fayetteville Museum of Art, free, (910) 485-5121, www.fmoa.org

Family Fun Saturday: Fire Safety
Aug. 5, Spencer
N.C. Transportation Museum, 10 a.m., (704) 636-2889

Street Festival 2000
Aug. 5, Stovall
Downtown, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., free, (919) 693-7295

General Greene Car Show
Aug. 5, Greensboro
Piedmont Triad Farmers Market, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., (336) 605-9157

Revolutionary War Battle
Reenactment
Aug. 5-6, Sanford
House in the Horseshoe, (910) 947-2051

Carolinas-Virginia Junior Team Golf Matches
Aug. 5-6, Pinehurst
(910) 692-6565

Brinegar Cabin Days
Aug. 5-6, Surry County
Blue Ridge Parkway MP 238.5, (336) 835-9814

Gun & Knife Show
Aug. 5-6, Fayetteville
Cumberland Co. Coliseum Complex, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., $5, (910) 323-5088

Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Social
Aug. 5 & 19, Pinnacle
Horne Creek Farm, 12-4 p.m., (336) 325-2298

England and America: Collaboration in Clay
Aug. 5-Feb. 11, Charlotte
Pottery exhibit, Mint Museum of Art, (704) 337-2000, www.mintmuseum.org

Reenactment Youth Days
Aug. 12, Waxhaw
Civil War, Museum of the Waxhaws, (704) 843-1832

Toy & Hobby Show
Aug. 12, Fayetteville
Cumberland Co. Coliseum Complex, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., $4, (910) 323-5088

Outdoor Jazz Concert
Aug. 14, Southern Pines
Sandhills Community College, (910) 692-6185

After 5 Concert
Aug. 17, Fayetteville
Fayetteville Museum of Art, 5:30-8:30 p.m., free, (910) 485-5121, www.fmoa.org

Old-Time Square Dance
Aug. 19, Denton
Denton Civic Center, 7-10:30 p.m., (336) 475-9397

Shirley Ceasar in Concert
Aug. 19, Fayetteville
Cumberland Co. Coliseum Complex, (910) 323-5088

1796 Militia Muster
Aug. 19-20, Pineville
James K. Polk Memorial, (704) 889-7145

Arts in the Park
Aug. 19 & 26, Pinehurst
Camelot Playground, 11 a.m., (910) 295-2817

"Sorcerer's Apprentice"
Aug. 22, Mocksville
Play, Brock Performing Arts Center, 7 p.m., (336) 751-3112

N/S Senior Amateur Men's & Women's Golf Championship
Aug. 22-24, Pinehurst
Pinehurst Resort, (910) 692-8140

Cumberland County Fair
Aug. 22-27, Fayetteville
Cumberland Co. Coliseum Complex, $4, (910) 323-5088

Greekfest
Aug. 25-27, Fayetteville
Cumberland Co. Coliseum Complex, (910) 323-5088

Herb Festival
Aug. 26, Durham
Duke Homestead, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., (919) 477-5498

Ostrich Day
Aug. 26, Greensboro
Piedmont Triad Farmers Market, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., (336) 605-9157

Antique Car Show
Aug. 26, Pinehurst
Pinehurst Harness Track, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., (910) 295-8456

WWF Smackdown
Aug. 29, Fayetteville
Cumberland Co. Coliseum Complex, 7:30 p.m., $17-$35, (910) 323-5088

Wine Festival
Aug. 31-Sept. 4, Pinehurst
Pinehurst Resort, (800) 487-4653

COAST

Obsolete Objects
Through Sept. 4, Wilmington
Obsolete everyday items, Cape Fear Museum, (910) 341-7413

"Worthy is the Lamb"
Through Mid-Sept., Morehead City
Outdoor drama, Crystal Coast Amphitheater, (800) 662-5960

"The Hole World"
Through Sept. 30, Wilmington
Underground animals exhibit, Cape Fear Museum, (910) 341-4350

"Ocracoke Island, 1955"
Through Nov. 26, Ocracoke
Photo exhibit, Ocracoke Preservation Society Museum, (252) 928-7375

African-American Builders & Architects in NC: 1730-1865
Through Dec. 31, Elizabeth City
Exhibit, Museum of the Albemarle, free, (252) 335-1453

N.C. Watermelon Festival
Aug. 2-5, Murfreesboro
(252) 398-5922

Sea Monsters
Aug. 3, Beaufort
Family fun, N.C. Maritime Museum, 1-4 p.m., $1, (252) 728-7317

Band the Billfish Tournament
Aug. 3-5, Morehead City
Anchorage Marina, (336) 668-2736

Marine Life Collecting Cruise
Aug. 8 & 15, Beaufort
Collect organisms on research vessel, N.C. Maritime Museum, 11:30 a.m., $15, (252) 728-7317

"Grease"
Aug. 9-13, 18-20, 25-27, Wilmington
Musical, Thalian Hall, 8 p.m., (910) 762-4234

Rachel Carson Reserve Trip
Aug. 11 & 24, Beaufort
N.C. Maritime Museum, 11 a.m., reservations required, $10, $5 6-12, (252) 728-7317

OWLS Sand Sculpture Contest
Aug. 12, Pine Knoll Shores
(252) 726-5168

Music Fair
Aug. 12, Wilmington
Rockit's Rhyme and Sports part of Beat Week, (910) 341-4030

Beat Week
Aug. 12-17, Wilmington
Various locations, (910) 341-4030

Sneads Ferry Shrimp Festival
Aug. 12-13, Sneads Ferry
Sneads Ferry Community Park, $2, under 12 free, (910) 327-4911

Birding by Boat
Aug. 17 & 31, Beaufort
N.C. Maritime Museum, 9-11 a.m., $10, (252) 728-7317

"Strong is the Bond of Kinship"
Aug. 19, New Bern
West African spirituality in American South, Tryon Palace Auditorium, 10 a.m., (252) 514-4900

Dinner Theater
Aug. 19, Rose Hill
Duplin Winery, 6:30 p.m., (910) 289-3094

Sea Turtles
Aug. 22, Beaufort
Slides and display, N.C. Maritime Museum, 2 p.m., (252) 728-7317

Seining the Sound
Aug. 25, Beaufort
Explore coastal wetland, N.C. Maritime Museum, 10-11:30 a.m., $5, (252) 728-7317

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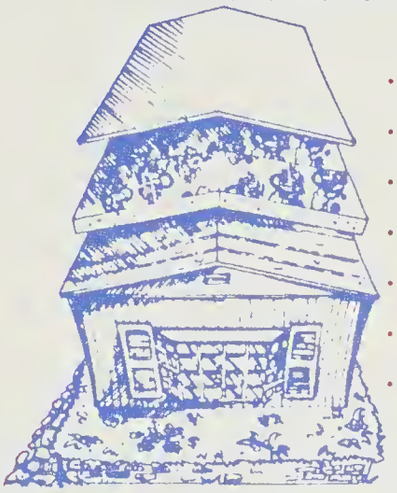

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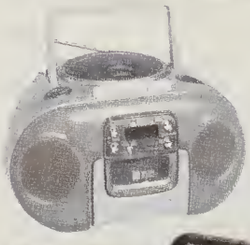
A buyer's guide by Sharon O'Malley

Sis-boom-bah!

These personal stereos put the "boom" in boom box with their sleek, ultra-modern designs, powerful sounds and slew of extras like CD players and background drum beats. Plug them in at home or load them with batteries to tote to the beach.

1 Kaboom!

This souped-up Kaboom Box by JVC America has a built-in CD player and guitar and microphone jacks so you can sing along. The tote-able stereo has four drum pads, a rhythm machine with 36 rhythms ranging from the classic eight-beat to rap and background ambient sounds of waves and birds. It costs about $330 wherever electronics are sold. Call (800) 252-5722 if you need help finding one.



2 Hear this!

AIWA's CDS-TD31 is a compact boom box with rounded styling, available in silver, blue or white. It features a digital synthesizer tuner with 30-station preset memory, a single cassette deck, LED display and CD repeat play. It sells for around $70. Call (800) BUY-AIWA for more information.

3 Great outdoors.

For outdoor adventures, tote Sony's ZS-X7 Sports CD boom box along. The shoulder strap makes it possible to sling it across your back and take music camping or hiking. The built-in stand helps stabilize the unit on rocky ground or a high shelf. It includes a CD player with skip protection, and comes in lacquer black or red. It costs just about $100. Call (800) 222-SONY.

4 Fashion accessory.

About the shape of a beach ball and just as colorful, the Emerson PD6511 weighs just 4.84 pounds, so you can take it to the beach. It features a top-loading CD player, a cassette player/recorder and a two-digit LCD function window. You'll find it for around $69.95. Call (800) 898-9020.

5 It's in there!

You'll find a built-in CD player, cassette deck and AM/FM stereo radio in Sharp's QT-CD210. The boom box has an LCD display for the CD, as well as CD repeat playback, a full-range speaker system and one-touch recording. It comes in blue, silver and white, and costs around $59.99. Call (800) 223-2121.

6 Titanium.

Using metal and rubber, Jeep fashioned its titanium CD boom box to deliver high-quality sound when it's positioned either vertically or horizontally. It features an AM/FM stereo radio, programmable CD player, soft-eject stereo cassette player/recorder and a bass boost. It costs around $129.99. Call (800) 354-8787.

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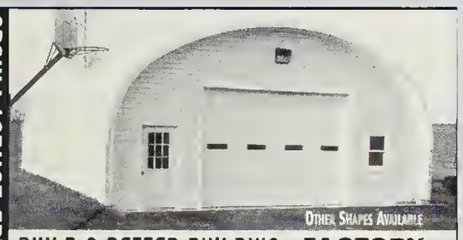

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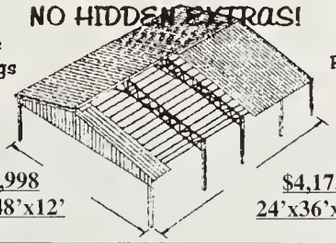

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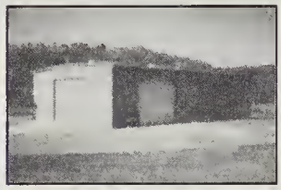

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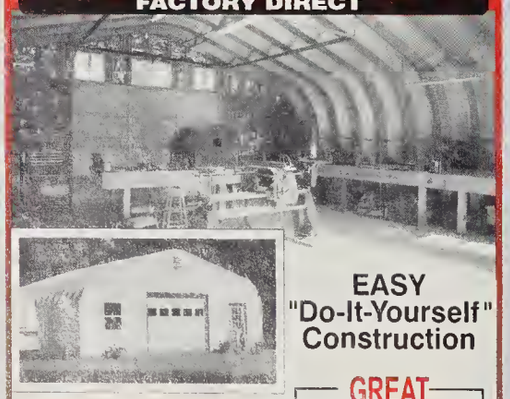

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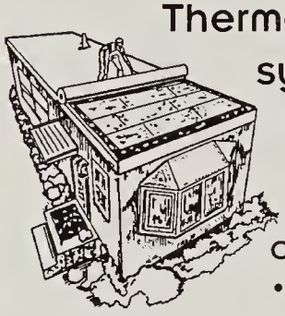

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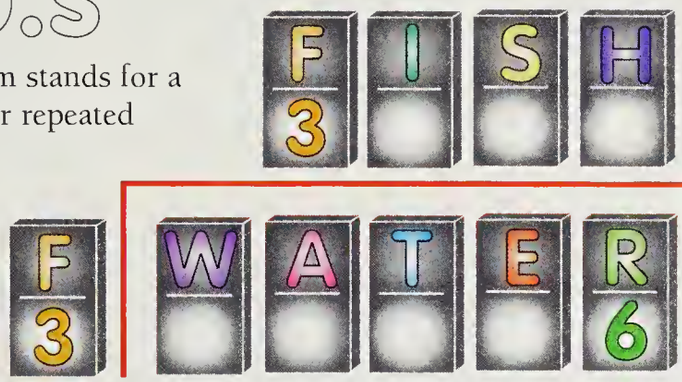
Domi-No.s

Each letter in this division problem stands for a numeral. Repeated letters stand for repeated numerals. Can you place seven of the numerals left on these **Domi-No.s** so that the problem is mathematically correct?



JOYNER'S CORNER

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Digit Detection

	A	U	G	U	S	T
9						
8						X
7						X
6						
5						
4						
3						X
2	X					X
1	X					
0	X					

G+S=U **U-A=T** **$(AU)^2$=GUST**

Given the simultaneous equations above, can you find the value of **August**? Each letter stands for a digit. Use the grid to eliminate impossibilities. For example, no square ends in 2, 3 , 7, or 8. Therefore **T** is not 2, 3, 7, or 8. No number less than 32 has a four-digit square. Therefore **A** is greater than 2.

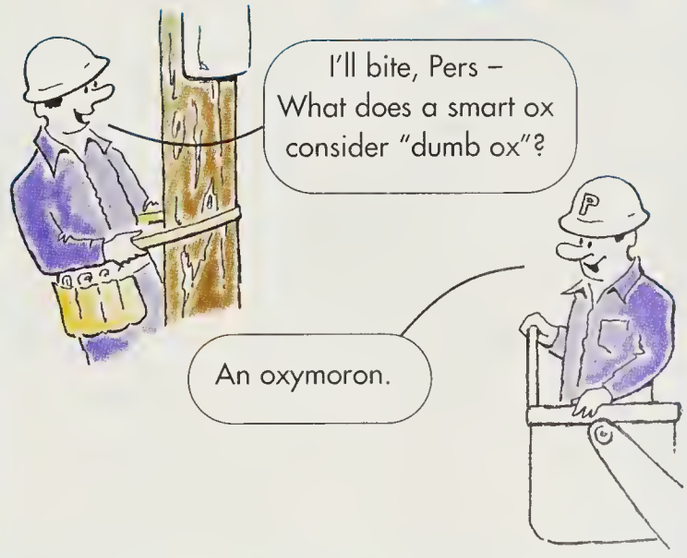
Word play

ward-war-way-lay

To go from **Step** to **Down** you must delete one letter, add one letter, or change one letter to another in each step, but you can only make one such change in each step.

1. Pick up a foot and put it down — **STEP**
2. Quit
3. Highest part
4. 2000 pounds
5. Smaller than a city
6. Opposite of up — **DOWN**

Percy P. Cassidy Poles Apart



Answers on page 37

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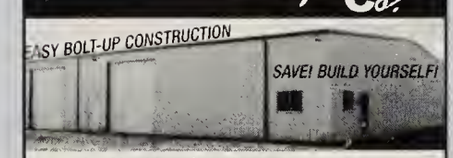

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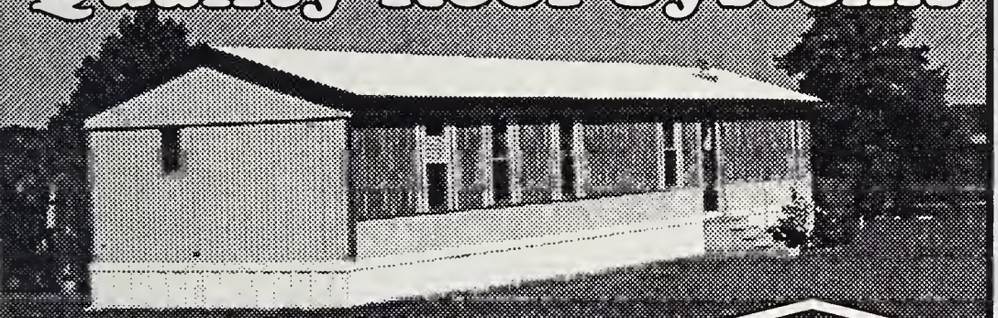

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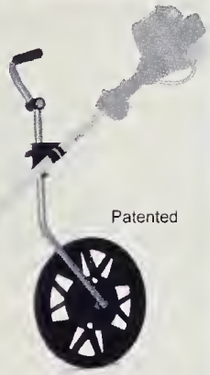

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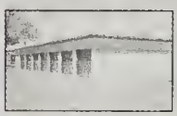

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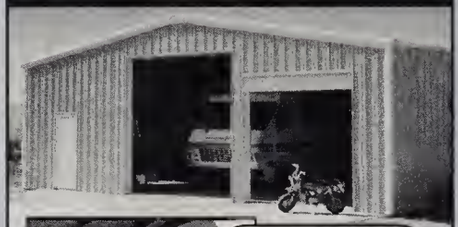
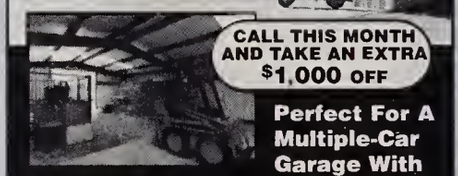

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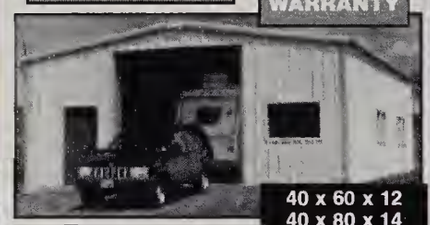

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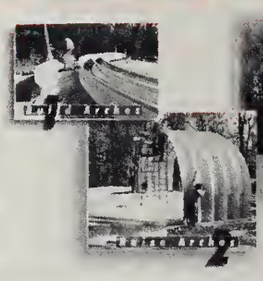

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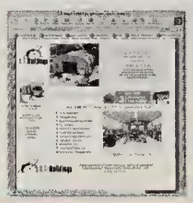

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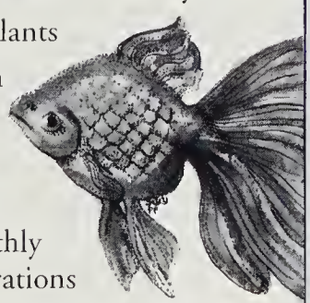

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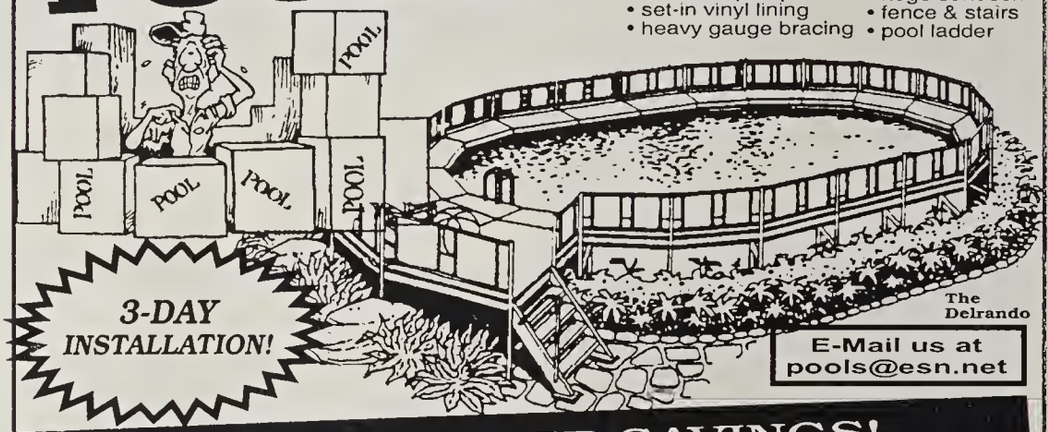

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Rolling window shutters protect against temperatures, storms and thieves

By James Dulley

Rolling window shutters have been popular in Europe (with their extremely high energy costs) and along the hurricane-prone regions of the United States for many years. When they are rolled up and completely opened, rolling shutters are totally hidden from view, so you are probably not aware of how many homes have them already.

Now, with more concern about security, energy savings, tornado/hurricane protection and privacy with today's smaller lots, rolling shutters are becoming popular throughout the entire country. Without sacrificing security and privacy, rolling shutters allow you to still have efficient natural ventilation and daylighting through your windows.

If you have never seen rolling shutters over windows, patio doors or porches on a house, they are quite attractive. They are available in many colors, and slat shapes and sizes and are custom designed to fit each window or door opening perfectly. Custom ones can even be made to fit new contemporary-shaped window shapes like arched, triangular and trapezoidal.

Installing rolling shutters saves money in several ways. The slats, of which many of the hollow ones are filled with foam insulation, create an insulating dead air space outside your window glass to lower both heating and cooling bills. This improves single pane window efficiency by about 65 percent and double pane window efficiency by about 50 percent. The protection from the elements also reduces window and door maintenance and can increase their lives.

Most rolling shutters are made of many horizontal 1.5- to 2-inch-high durable insulating slats that operate similar to an old rolltop desk. The ends of the slats slide in small, but strong, channels that are attached to the sides of the outdoor window opening. In retrofitting an existing house, the slats roll up into a long narrow housing that is hidden under the roof overhang. In new construction, the housing can be hidden inside the roof soffit.

For convenience and security, you open and close the shutters from indoors. The least expensive method, usually for only small to standard-sized windows, uses a small indoor strap to operate the shutter. The strap comes indoors at the top through a small sealed hole in the wall and it operates smoothly and easily.

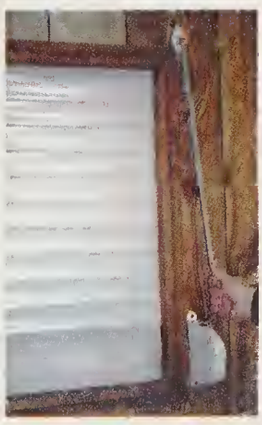
For rolling shutters on standard to larger windows or doors, an optional indoor hand crank mechanism is often used. This is very durable and makes it easy to open the shutter precisely as much as you want. For very large shutters, or for extra convenience, an electric drive motor built into the housing is used to raise and lower the rolling shutter.

If you select a motor drive option and you plan to install shutters on several windows/doors, consider one with hand-held remote controls, just like on your TV. Some motor/control units allow you to program several groups of shutters together. You press one remote control button and only the programmed shutters raise or lower simultaneously. Timers, sun, wind and rain sensors can also automatically close shutters when you are away from home.

The interlocking flanges that hold adjacent slats together have open slots cut into them. When the shutter is totally lowered and closes against the weatherstripping seal at the bottom, the upper interlocking flange on each slat slides up completely into the slat above it. This hides these open slots inside the mating slats to block all light and about 70 percent of outdoor noise.

As you start to raise the shutter, the slats spread apart before the bottom seal actually begins to lift from the sill and uncover the window. If you just start to raise it a little, only a few slats separate to expose some slot openings for natural lighting and ventilation.

Raise it a little more to expose more open slots for controllable levels of light and ventilation. At this point, the shutter is still resting on the sill for privacy. Raise it slightly more and it begins to uncover your window or all the way up to totally uncover your window.



The basic slat material options that you can choose from are (in increasing cost) —- PVC plastic, rolled aluminum with insulation and extruded aluminum. Insulated rolled aluminum is tougher than PVC for greater wind and impact resistance. Extruded aluminum slats are the strongest, but they are heavier and are not usually filled with insulation.

Write for (or instantly download at www.dulley.com) Update Bulletin No. 693: buyer's guide of 13 rolling shutter manufacturers showing slat material/size/color and opening control options, insulation, prices, features and illustrations. Please include $3.00 and a business-size SASE. James Dulley, Carolina Country, P.O. Box 54987, Cincinnati, OH 45254.

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Hank's Gardening Guide

By Hank Smith

This month we should see lilies and gladioli join summer annuals in casting color over the landscape. Roses begin to make a second flush of bloom. Crape myrtles bear huge panicles of bloom. Tender spring growth of shrubs has matured to proper stage for rooting cuttings.

August Tips

1. Discourage red spiders on azaleas by spraying a fine mist of water on upper and lower sides of leaves.
2. Discontinue monthly fertilizer feeding of camellias and azaleas.
3. For larger camellia blooms, disbud if flower buds are thickly clustered at tip of a stem. Remove side buds to divert growth energy to remaining bud.
4. Statice, strawflowers, cockscomb and other flowers to be dried for winter bouquets should be gathered now. Place in paper bags, stems tied into bundles. Hang in a dry place.
5. Tulip poplars' leaves are beginning to yellow and fall, heralding the beginning of compost season. Select an out-of-the-way site where tree and shrub roots will not rob the pile of moisture and nutrients.
6. Azaleas and camellias now are setting flower buds for next season's blooms. Don't let plants become too dry during this critical period. If rainfall is scant, soak soil once a week to support active growth.
7. Geraniums rooted for winter house plants are now ready for potting in mellow, loamy soil. Place in well-drained pots. Do not over water. Give broken sunlight. In early October, place indoors in a sunny window.
8. Transplant daylilies and irises. New transplants will have time to become well established before cold weather.
9. A three- or four-inch mulch around young trees and shrubs will help to conserve moisture, protect shallow roots from the drying sun and help control growth of weeds and grasses around plants.
10. Turn poinsettia plants that were plunged in soil in the spring. This reduces root growth to help form a more compact plant. Cut back top growth by 8 to 10 inches of each stem to form a compact plant.

Fig picking

Should you be among the lucky gardeners who have figs that survived last winter's freezes, you may be picking them to preserve or eat fresh. For preserving, gather figs several days before they fully ripen. This reduces damage from splitting and souring. Also, fruit will hold together better when cooked. For eating fresh, pick as soon as they ripen for the best flavor. When pulling fruit from the tree, leave stem attached to fruit.

Color care

Dig-divide-transplant established perennials such as all-time favorites cannas, violets, daylilies and Shasta daisies. Before replanting, prepare soil by adding leaf mold or compost and a mild organic fertilizer such as bonemeal. Rejuvenate summer-flowering bedding plants, such as salvia and petunias, by judicious pruning and feeding twice a month beginning in late August and continuing through October. Take care not to cut back into mature wood when pruning. If iron deficiency has caused yellowing of foliage, apply iron sulfate (copperas) or iron chelate at strength recommended on the label.

Autumn vegetables

Hopefully, you're now enjoying the success of the spring-planted vegetable garden. Now's the time to look ahead to fresh vegetables in the autumn. Prepare soil and start transplants soon. If the garden area was planted and fertilized for crops already harvested, very little, if any, fertilizer need be added. On a new garden site, apply two to three pounds of complete fertilizer per 100 square feet. Work fertilizer into soil. Adequate water is of major importance — water stress during early growth can reduce later yields. Light watering three or four times a week may be necessary to prevent crusting and drying out of soil. Follow watering period rules of your community. When transplanting seedlings, allow four to five weeks from time of seeding to setting young plants. Transplants of recommended varieties sometimes are difficult to find in garden centers at this time of year. Vegetables to plant during late July and August include pole beans, tomatoes, okra, peppers, eggplants, potatoes and squash.

Cockscomb (shown), statice, strawflowers and other flowers to be dried for winter bouquets should be gathered now. Place in paper bags, stems tied into bundles. Hang in a dry place.

Bamboo quick screening

This tall-growing grass is adapted to use as a rapidly maturing background screen for shrubbery borders and flowerbeds. It also is useful as a screening plant to hide unsightly views. As bamboo spreads rapidly by clump growth and roots that sprout new growth, it is advisable to plant in a large container with no drainage holes. Roots can escape through holes to produce more plants that can overtake nearby plant beds. Planting the container on the ground gives support in strong winds, as well as a finished appearance to the landscape. At higher altitudes bamboo needs winter protection. The jointed, hollow, reed-like stems are useful as supports for vines and such plants as large-flowered dahlias that may become top-heavy. The stems often are used as fishing poles.

Question and answer

Q: We've had a beautiful flower garden with hollyhocks as the tall background plant. How can I get them to reseed for next summer's garden? – A.R.S., Blue Ridge Electric

A: As flowers fade, cut back the stalks and scatter the seed over prepared beds where you ant hollyhocks next year. You should see little rosettes by autumn. If parent plants are in good shape, leave them to flower next year.

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CAROLINA KITCHEN

Grilled Steak Fajitas

Light the grill for savory grilled steak fajitas.

Marinate the meat overnight to make it more tender and flavorful. Serve with Spanish rice and refried beans.

1 flank steak (1½ pounds)
1 large onion, cut into wedges
1 medium green pepper, julienned
1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chilies
½ cup lemon juice
½ cup cider or red wine vinegar
½ cup vegetable oil
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon dried oregano
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper
12 flour tortillas (6 inches)
1 medium avocado, peeled and sliced, optional
sour cream, optional

Place steak in a shallow glass container or large resealable plastic bag. Place onion and green pepper in another container or bag. Combine chilies, lemon juice, vinegar, oil, garlic, Worcestershire sauce, oregano, salt and pepper. Pour 1½ cups over meat. Pour remaining marinade over vegetables. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Drain meat and vegetables, discarding marinade. Grill steak, covered, over medium-hot heat for 10 minutes on each side or until meat reaches desired doneness (for rare, a meat thermometer should read 140 degrees; medium 160 degrees; well-done, 170 degrees) Meanwhile, cut two pieces of heavy-duty foil into 18-inch by 12-inch rectangles. Wrap tortillas in one piece and vegetables in the other; seal foil tightly. Grill, covered, over indirect heat for 5-7 minutes, turning occasionally. Cut steak into ⅛ inch slices across the grain; place on tortillas. Top with vegetables and roll up. Serve with avocado and sour cream if desired. Yield: 6 servings

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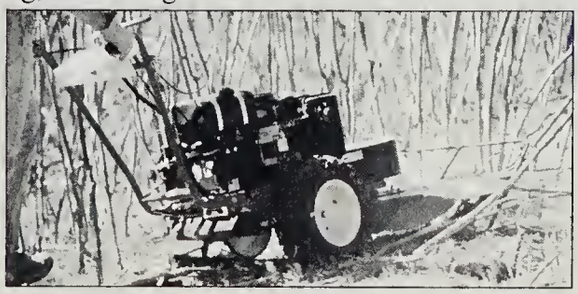

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